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Release Roundup

The d20 publishing machine keeps on cranking out dozens of releases a month. With new books choking the shelves at the local game store and production values increasing across the board, it's become very difficult to determine which products are worth getting, and which will be headed to eBay about 12 minutes after you crack the cover. Here in the musty offices of *Polyhedron*, piles of new d20 products accumulate like crested felldrakes and wolves in a case of D&D Miniatures. We read most of these books, and have a decent idea of which ones are worth checking out. Listen to us. We're here to help.

Illustration by Rey Lewis

Modern Player's Companion (The Game Mechanics/Green Ronin Publishing)

Author: Stan! (with Rich Redman and Charles Ryan)
Format: 80 black-and-white pages, perfect bound
Price: $16.95

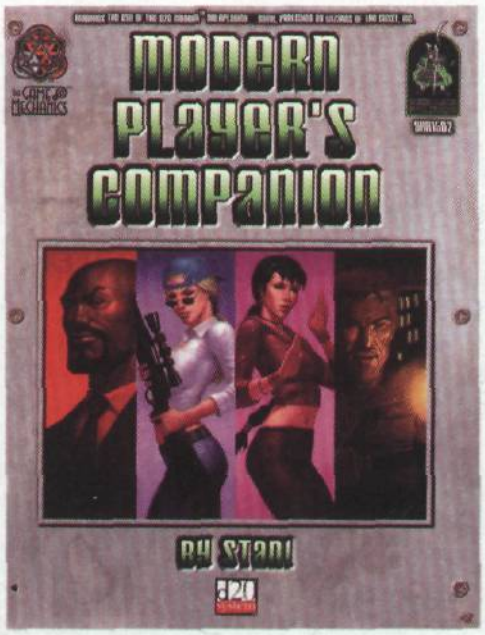
Even after 3 years, most d20 System designers don't quite seem as comfortable with the d20 rules as the folks at Wizards of the Coast, who after all work with the system every single day. Green Ronin (itself the product of WotC alum Chris Pramas) touts its line as "d20 done right," a claim made much easier by the fact that its list of freelancers reads like a "who's who" of current and former Wizards professionals (including, in the interest of full disclosure, the staff of this magazine).

Their latest release, the *Modern Player's Companion*, continues the "d20 done right" tradition, even making the authors' familiarity with the *d20 Modern* design team one of the book's foremost selling points: "The *Modern Player's Companion* is designed with the same principles, decisions, and guidelines that the original [*d20 Modern*] designers used. We know this because it is written, edited, and produced by people who were involved in creating the *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* and the *Urban Arcana* Campaign Setting."

They aren't kidding. The book's primary author, Stan!, has a cover credit on Urban Arcana and provided "design assistance and advice" to the *d20 Modern* designers when he worked at Wizards. Rich Redman, who offers "additional design" for the *Modern Player's Companion*, designed a great deal of the *d20 Modern* game, and it doesn't hurt to have *d20 Modern* super-guru and WotC RPG Category Manager Charles Ryan as a "proofreader" (would that we were so lucky).

This kind of design cred brings with it a remarkable approach to rules design that almost perfectly matches that taken in official *d20 Modern* products. Nothing in the *Modern Player's Companion* will destroy the balance of your campaign, and only the book's black and white art and trade dress differentiate it from a full-blown Wizards release. New rules nicely supplement those in the official books, and several sidebars go out of their way to explain controversial or confusing elements of the core *d20 Modern* rules. These sidebars range from insightful and interesting ("Why Only 10 Levels in Basic Classes?") to unsettlingly defensive ("Why Wealth Works"), but generally add a "here's why we do it this way" quality that only people who know what they're talking about can truly provide. Anyone who loved the "Behind the Curtain" sidebars in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* will want to get this book, if only to get into the heads of talented and knowledgeable game designers.

The *Companion* opens with a chapter on characters, with several new talent trees to help you better customize the game's basic classes. The best of these is the Adapt talent, which allows a Smart hero to learn from combat failures (gaining a dodge bonus against a previously successful enemy) or improve her chances using an Intelligence-based skill. The chapter also includes seven new occupations, ranging from bohemian to politico, which fill more specific niches than most of the occupations presented in the core rules. Not all are created equal—the politico has a game balance edge over her bohemian sister, but isn't quite as good as the entrepreneur of the core rules. In this way, perhaps *d20 Modern* is *too* realistic.



Judging by the defensiveness of the section on Wealth, a lot of *d20 Modern* players want to see a less abstract system for buying stuff, something the *Companion's* designers dutifully (if grudgingly) provide. The new system's complexity will do little to convince anyone pleased with the current Wealth rules to make the switch, which was probably their intent.

New players who feel daunted by the openness of *d20 Modern's* character class system will appreciate a section on how to build such diverse characters as pro athletes, reporters, and rock stars using a combination of the game's basic classes. Experienced players will flock to the book's 14 advanced classes (including the Arcane Scholar, with "tome lore" that seems fitting for a character based on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer's* Rupert Giles). The usual assortment of prestige classes includes the Commander (who supports allies and rattles enemies from a distance), the Master Tinkerer (who can build awesome robots), the Psionic Assassin (who receives an easily-concealable psychic knife), and the Silent Intruder (who shares many abilities of D&D's shadowdancer and adds his level on Disable Device checks).

Notable among the book's dozens of new feats are Back Off (take a free 5-foot step instead of an attack of opportunity), Bull's Eye (spend an action point to automatically confirm a ranged critical), Lucky (spend an action point to reroll a d20), and Self Improvement (raise one ability score permanently by +1). A bit of cultural sensitivity sure to be appreciated by non-Americans involves a subtle change to the game's language rules. An optional Multilingual feat essentially gives the GM carte blanche to give starting characters as many Speak Language and Read/Write Language abilities as needed for the campaign. No longer must Dutch player characters choose only one of their nation's 37 languages!

Those of you begging for d20 rules for fanny packs and fishing rods will love the *Companion's* brief equipment chapter, which also includes information for multi-function PDA/cellphones, portable hard drives, and encyclopedias. There's nothing earthshaking, here, but players love to shop and will appreciate subtle touches such as rules for researching with a library collection.

A great (and often funny) chapter on new FX Abilities provides gems like *fast food* (which summons a pre-bagged take-out meal from an existing restaurant, complete with plastic fork and napkins) and *personal soundtrack*, which plays a musical theme or sound effect every time the caster takes a specific action. Wonderful.

The *Modern Player's Companion* (along with the previously published *Ultramodern Firearms*) makes Green Ronin (to say nothing of The Game Mechanics) the company to watch for excellent unofficial modern-era d20 material.—Erik Mona

Bolt and Quiver by Stan!

SO. THE WARRIORS OF THE CODE NOT ONLY RENAMED AND RECATEGORIZED MY PRIMARY WEAPON, BUT NOW I HAVE TO TAKE A FEAT JUST TO REMAIN PROFICIENT IN ITS USE?
'TIS ONLY FAIR, MY ENRAGED COMPATRIOT.
FAIR?
AYE. IN THE PAST YOU USED A WEAPON THAT WAS PROPORTIONALLY THE SIZE OF A LONGSWORD, BUT BECAUSE OF ITS NAME YOU GOT TO USE IT WITHOUT ANY REAL SPECIALIZATION.
MARTIAL WEAPONS ARE DANGEROUS, QUIVER. THE REVISED ADVENTURER'S HANDBOOK SIMPLY REQUIRES THAT YOU HAVE THE PROPER TRAINING AND PRACTICE BEFORE WIELDING SUCH A WEAPON SAFELY.
OH, I'M MORE THAN WILLING TO PRACTICE!
©2003 STAN!
'STRUTH! I DID NOT KNOW YOU HAD TAKEN SO MANY LEVELS IN BARBARIAN!
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Mighty, Mighty Goodman

A Chat with the Mad Genius of Goodman Games

A *Polyhedron* Interview

ACROSS THE CONVENTION AISLE, middle-aged men do double-takes at a wargaming booth, eager to learn more about a puzzle featuring the surgical miracle of one of Comedy Central's "juggies," Playboy-style bimbos best known for skimpy outfits and trampoline routines. On our side of the hall, bright-faced gamers approach a simple display of stacked books, sorting through titles like *The Complete Guide to Liches*, *Idylls of the Rat King*, *Dave Arneson's Blackmoor*, and *Broncosaurus Rex* while lauding the booth's proprietor with praise. There's a friendly, personal touch to their comments, as if the customers were talking to an friend, even a favorite Dungeon Master.

The man responsible (almost single-handedly responsible) for their comments is Joe Goodman, a young publisher who jumped into the d20 industry in the early days with a quirky game mixing the American Civil War, dinosaurs, and rayguns. In the years since, he's built Goodman Games into a reliable enterprise that never shirks from providing slightly off-beat products in an increasingly homogenized marketplace.

We recently met up with Joe at a national game convention to ask him about his company, his unique approach to publishing, and his his plans for the future.

What the hell were you thinking mixing dinosaurs and the Civil War?

I don't know. It just seemed like a good idea at the time, you know? I was reading these comic books that got me thinking about dinosaurs. Nobody had done a dinosaur game. Ricardo Delgado does a comic called *Age of Reptiles*, where the dinosaurs are highly intelligent, tribal, and pseudoreligious. They have emotions. No words, though. The entire comic, it's all visuals. He does a great job of conveying emotion with dinosaurs.

So I read that and I was like "wow!" This would be awesome for a miniatures game with intelligent tribal velociraptors fighting the T-Rex and their dynasties and so on.

And then I read this other comic called *Blueberry*, one of the longest-running comics ever, in France. Moebius, one of the most famous comic artists ever, got his start doing *Blueberry*. So it's all his early art, with this amazing writer named Charlier. It's like this awesome western. It's the only western comic I like. So I was reading dinosaur comics here and westerns there.

> **"...I was recovering on Vicodin... that's when I actually did all the writing... that's where some of the more unusual stuff started appearing."**

One day I was hanging out or something and I had this image of a Confederate soldier on a T-Rex charging into battle with the stars and bars fluttering in the wind behind him bearing down on the plains toward a Union hovertank. I don't know where it came from, but I was like "that's it!" And that's how it got started.

Then I had surgery, and I was recovering on Vicodin, which is a really powerful painkiller. And that's when I actually did all the writing, so I think that's where some of the more unusual stuff started appearing.

What's been the response to *Broncosaurus Rex*?

People either love it or they hate it. Some people are like, "This is weird. What the Hell?" And other people, they get this look in their eyes, and they're like, "Woooah! That's cool!"

Are you committed to supporting *Broncosaurus Rex* for a good time to come?

Yes. It is my baby, but I'm also at the point where I don't want to be a vanity press. At a lot of companies, the owner keeps his own stuff in publication because he's the owner. I'm not really into that. So the next step for *Broncosaurus Rex* is a comic book, not the d20 stuff.

What's the next step for Goodman Games?

What I want to do is innovative, original products. But it takes a while to come up with them. And there has to be something to fill the gaps between. So *Broncosaurus Rex* was weird idea #1. Right now I'm working on weird idea #2, which is *Dragonmech*. Medieval fantasy mechs powered by steam. There will be other weird ones, and in between those spaces will be fantasy products, trying to take an original twist on them, like evil treants or good liches.

Instead of your traditional good treant aiding the forest, the cover of the Complete *Guide to Treants* pictures an evil fiery treant trying to raze a farmer's field and beat the crap out of him. The prem-

ise of the book is that it covers treant psychology. You're hanging out in this forest, you protect this forest, you live there for like 5000 years. What happens if someone screws you over and destroys your forest? You become schizophrenic or psychotic, but you're a treant. So it has rules for these messed-up treants who go around screwing stuff up. Evil treants.

There's a lot of fantasy products out now. There are even a lot of products out there that are like the "guide to goblins," or whatever. What makes your products different than everyone else doing them in the hobby right now?

I think partially that I don't rely on traditional fantasy stereotypes or archetypes. I actually haven't read a lot of fantasy literature, just because my personal reading interests aren't there. So personally, I couldn't write a book about treants, or if I did I'd have to make a lot of stuff up which probably wouldn't jibe with a traditional fantasy genre. So when I ask a writer to do a book on that subject, I ask him to come back with something that's really different, that I wouldn't have thought of, and that's something unique. There are a lot of other companies who do a really good job when they're doing an orc book or a goblin book, but when I read it...I'm also older, and a lot of gamers are younger, and this might be for them the first exposure to "Ooh! This is what an orc is." But for somebody who's older and who's, you know, heard about orcs for a while, you're like "Uggh. An orc."

If I did an orc book they'd be like purple and fight with mushrooms or something.

What's the next crazy idea?

The one that I'm working most actively on is *Dragonmech*, whose tagline is "Medieval fantasy mechs powered by steam, magic, or the labor of a thousand slaves." The world got started as a traditional fantasy world, but basically the moon collapsed onto the planet. Got pulled into the planet's orbit and razed the planet's surface in what was called the Lunar Rain, which was basically a nightly meteor storm. The surface was devastated, totally desolate. All the surface dwellers had to fight to go under ground to pursue safety, because there was no safety from the Lunar Rain when it was at its worst. Over a long period of time, they established massive wars underground, as people fought for space in a limited area. But an ancient dwarf came forth from the subterranean depths. He said he traveled a thousand miles, and he came to Dwaeroth, the dwarven capital, and said that in ages past, Dwaeroth had aided the Gearwright's Guild, and he had come to repay the favor. The eldest dwarves remembered their grandfathers telling stories of their grandfathers telling stories about the Gearwright's Guild, but nobody had any direct recollection of them.

But this guild was these sort of crazy, bizarre steampunk guys who built mechs. So the dwarves learned how to build mechs out of big coal furnaces belching forth black gusts of smoke and so on. And they developed these mechs with these thick metal skins that could walk the earth even under the Lunar Rain. So the dwarves took to the surface again. The elves followed suit with magically animated mechs. The orcs built these really crude replicas that involved slaves turning wheels and stuff because they didn't have the intelligence to use steam power.

From there you get a world populated by mechs. The world's basic social unit has become the mech, because on the surface there is no other way for survival, so you have city mechs, which are the height of a skyscraper housing thousands of people who wander the surface, with little mech fleets that deploy from their shins and patrol the ground.

One other crazy idea is called *Pimps in Space*, which might never see the light of day. It involves the plant Pimpulon. It's very fun. The best part is that the mystical force is called not the Force, but the Fros. It includes rules for afros, and the barber NPC class...if your afro is a 10th-level afro, you have to have a 10th-level barber or else you might mess up your Fros. But that one might never see the light of day.

Do you ever get bored reading other companies' d20 stuff?

Yeah, sometimes. Yes.

There seems to be a method to your madness. What is it?

Just doing stuff different. I like to do stuff that's different, that people will remember, and say "oh yeah, that was pretty cool," and they don't confuse it with the other books by other companies.

Do you think there are other companies out there who have a similar philosophy, who are doing interesting, innovative stuff?

Yeah, definitely. Privateer Press does amazing stuff. They're heavily focused on the visuals, but the concepts are really good, too. Green Ronin does great work. They focus on fantasy, but they do interesting fantasy, like the *Avatar's Handbook*, or *Fang and Fury*, which was about vampires, but they didn't just say "be a vampire." They created a new sort of vampire spawn, or scion-to-be, but yeah, there are definitely others, too. There are a lot of companies doing cool stuff. This is a creative industry.

Do you plan to be here for a long time?

Yeah, I have a 40-year business plan.

40 years?

Yeah. Publishing is stage one.

What's Stage 2?

I cannot talk about it at this time. ●

Living Greyhawk™

Enlightenment can penetrate even the helm of iron—Cuthbertine proverb

Campaign Director: Stephen Radney-MacFarland
Contributing Reporter: Jason Bulmahn

Sea of Dust at Winter Fantasy

Last year, WINTER FANTASY provided a rare opportunity to duke it out with the drow in their infernal vault. This year is your chance to explore the ruins of an empire burned to dust by the rain of colorless fire. Although little remains, a malignance still broods under the dust, waiting to be discovered. Heroes who succeed in this event will be entered into a random drawing for the chance to take home a relic from this ancient empire, no doubt powerful items the likes of which have not been seen in countless years. Don't miss out on this rare opportunity. Heroes who wish to play in this event would do well to play COR3-16: *Lerara*. Still want more? Here's the official blurb:

COR4-S01: ***Sea of Dust***, by the Circle: "Time is the fire in which we burn." Those words echo in your head as you stare across the endless Sea of Dust before you. The mighty Suel empire, feared by all, once stood here. Now the fire that burns has washed it clean and time has buried and forgotten it. Sometimes things best left forgotten do not remain so and things thought long dead and swept away in the fires of time return. The shifting winds and dust have revealed a ruined city deep in the Sea of Dust. Time to grab the shovels and see what lurks beneath the ashes of empire. A Core Special scenario for APLs 2–16. This scenario will only be available for play at WINTER FANTASY 2004.

And look for these other great events at WINTER FANTASY:

COR4-01: ***Shedding Scales***, by Shawn Merwin. A knightly order dedicated to stopping a nameless evil, a mysterious sect of an ancient Suel goddess, and a diviner charged with undoing a diabolical ritual. These diverse forces struggle to end a threat in the cradle of the former Occluded Empire of the Whispered One. Is the danger confined to a backwater barony on the edge of the Rushmoors, or is something more at stake? An adventure for APLs 2–12. Part One of the "Windows to the Serpent's Soul" series.

COR4-02: ***The Stone Man's Puzzle***, by Ron Lundeen. The town of Hardby was in complete disarray when you arrived. The courthouse was broken into and the accused whisked away by a giant man of stone. The tracks should be easy enough to follow, but who would want to spirit away a mere bookkeeper? An adventure for APLs 6–10.

COR4-03: ***Tropical Intrigue***, by Michael McKeown. In the taverns of the Free City of Greyhawk, stories have passed down over the years of a shipwrecked adventuring party that explored the Amedio Hook 18 years ago. Unfortunately, the area is now controlled by the Scarlet Sign. Your patron wants to know more. She asks for volunteers for a journey across the Azure Sea. Not another sea voyage! An adventure for APLs 2–12.

3.5 is Here

By now, your new-and-improved 3.5 version of your hero should be ready to take on the world. While all of the adventures premiering after October 1st, 2003 are written for the 3.5 rule set, those from before that date will require a conversion. For regionals and meta-regional adventures, the conversion sheets can be found in PDF form right along with the adventures themselves at www.living-greyhawk.com, using the same password to open. Your triad can provide the conversion sheet for core adventures. Since you now get four 3.5 vrocks for the same EL as one 3.0 vrock, these conversions can make the difference between your players yawning and your players running from the dance of ruin!

Region News

It's been an exciting year for the LIVING GREYHAWK campaign. Some of the most fantastic growth for the campaign has occurred in Europe, where the regions of Dullstrand (Switzerland) and Naerie (Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Sweden) have put out their first adventures while Knurl (Greece) has become active again and should begin putting out adventures soon. Next time you are in Europe, check out the region you are traveling to, as there might just be a game to pick up on the way.

On a sad note, the Circle has decided to fold the region of Ratik (Hawaii) into Nyrond (Southern California, Utah, and Arizona). All Ratik PCs will automatically become citizens of Nyrond as of February 1st, 2004. All Ratik adventures will still be playable in Hawaii until they retire as normal.

Enchiridion of the Fiend-Sage:

BEASTS OF THE SCARLET BROTHERHOOD

Living Greyhawk

By Paul Looby and Stuart Kerrigan
Illustration by UDON

Fireseek, 594 CY

My Deathless Suzerain,

I note with some satisfaction that the Dweomermasters have finally desisted in their futile, if irritating, scrying. It is my sincere hope that Iskendred the Seer's defenestration did not overly inconvenience the traffic in the street below.

Communication between Ountsy and Kalstrand has resumed this past month. Most interestingly, the Trine's Court initiated contact on this occasion. I have thus far been unable to trace the messages back to Emmara herself, but in this I see the hand of that bothersome man Svencer. With your permission I can give him a glimpse of the visions that sent Iskendred out for a breath of air, as it were. In the meantime I would recommend placing a careful watch upon the comings and goings from the Temple of Zilchus and the judicious application of torture upon those priests acting as couriers for this seditious correspondence. If you think it politic, I have methods that will leave no (visible) scars.

I enclose some notes on several interesting creatures for your edification, including some inspiring examples of the breeding projects undertaken by the deluded Brothers of the Scarlet Sign.

Your ever diligent scholar,

The Fiend-Sage
Rl Astra

Yeshir (Halfling hound)

Medium Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 3d10+2 (19 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), burrow 20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class: 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+5
Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d6+2 plus poison)
Full Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d6+2 plus poison) and 2 claws +0 melee (1d4+1)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Fear aura, poison
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., scent
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 2, Wis 14, Cha 10
Skills: Hide +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +5, Spot +7, Survival +4 (+8 when tracking by scent)
Feats: Alertness, Track[B], Run
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (5–20)
Challenge Rating: 2
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 4–5 HD (Medium-size); 6–9 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: —

An Asperdi sea captain presented me with a pair of these fine beasts as partial repayment of a debt (the souls of the man's pleasingly large brood of children forming the balance). I am endeavoring to formulate a gas from the venom, which you may find useful in flushing the hobniz vermin of the Grandwood from their burrows. The blind terror that the hounds strike in the heart of halflings is really quite invigorating to behold and adds a delectable piquancy to their meat.

Yeshirs (halfling hounds) are large hounds bred centuries ago by the princes of the Suel Imperium for the express purpose of hunting, tracking and killing halfings.

Large and heavily-built hounds, yeshirs typically stand about 3–4 feet at the shoulder and weigh about 150 pounds. Their heavy bristly coat is often brown, black, or gray. They have a broad, blunt head, heavily muscled neck, and powerful front legs with long claws equally efficient at digging prey out of their burrows and rending flesh.

Halfling meat was considered a delicacy in the last centuries of the Suel Imperium. The decadent nobility used yeshirs to run hobniz to ground and dig them out of their burrows using their large front paws. Suel migrants brought the dogs to the Flanaess a millennium ago and the beasts have spread widely since. Yeshirs are not generally kept in lands that enjoy good relations with halflings, as the hobniz understandably loathe them. Many Aerdi nobles possess yeshirs, and the Naelax overkings reportedly revived the "sport" of hunting hobniz with horse and hounds. The purest yeshir bloodlines dwell in the realm of Shar, where the Scarlet Brotherhood preserves both the breed and the malign tradition of their forebears.

Yeshirs are usually kept in domesticated (if still fierce) hunting packs. However, the Scarlet Brotherhood has released a number of feral packs in the lands of the Iron League to terrorize local hobniz populations.

Combat

Yeshirs have keen senses and can efficiently track prey by scent, sight, or sound. Though not the swiftest of hounds, and incapable of sustained bursts of speed, their strength, patience and cunning more than make up for this. Bred to track a sentient foe, yeshirs are sly beasts and often cooperate in pairs or a pack to isolate and surround or ambush their prey. If they run their prey to ground, they surround the burrow, covering any possible escape routes. One or two hounds then move up and begin digging out the trapped hobniz, one dog watching over the other, protecting it from attack.

Yeshirs usually attempt to bite with their poisonous fangs, following up with rending swipes with its powerful front claws. Yeshir venom is effective on other creatures, but halflings are particularly sensitive to its effects. The hounds attempt to immobilize all opponents as quickly as possible. If the pack meets strong opposition, they retreat, attempting to drag any immobilized prey away with them.

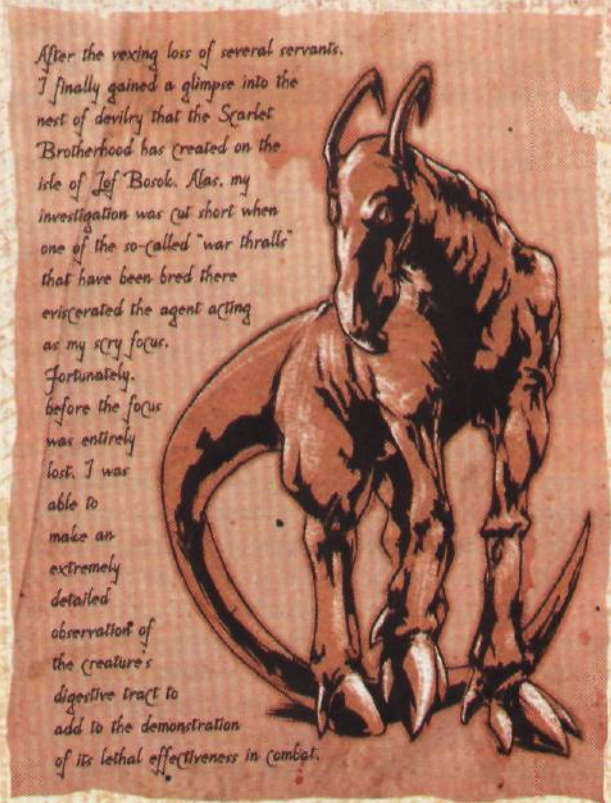
Fear Aura (Su): In the presence of a yeshir, halflings must make a successful Will save (DC 11) or become panicked. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Poison (Ex): Bite, Fortitude DC 12, initial and secondary damage 1d6 Dex. The save DC is Constitution-based. Halflings are particularly susceptible to yeshir venom. They take a –2 penalty on saves agaisnt this poison and take double damage to their Dexterity from the poison.

Skills: Yeshirs receive a +1 racial bonus on Listen, Move Silently, and Spot checks, and a +2 racial bonus on Hide checks. Additionally, yeshirs gain a +4 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Mazchedeen (Tunnel-hunters)

Medium Aberration
Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (22 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), climb 20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class: 16 (+4 Dex, +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 12
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+5
Attack: Bite +5 melee (2d6+2)
Full Attack: Bite +5 melee (2d6+2) and 2 claws +0 melee (1d4+1)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Acid spit
Special Qualities: Blindsight 60 ft., camouflage, Suel failsafe
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +4
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 18, Con 13, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills: Hide +18, Listen +3, Move Silently +8
Feats: Improved Natural Attack (bite), Stealthy
Environment: Any underground
Organization: Solitary, pair, or pack (5–20)
Challenge Rating: 2
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always lawful neutral
Advancement: 5–8 HD (Large); 9–12 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment: +3


After the vexing loss of several servants, I finally gained a glimpse into the nest of devilry that the Scarlet Brotherhood has created on the isle of Tef Bosok. Alas, my investigation was cut short when one of the so-called "war thralls" that have been bred there eviscerated the agent acting as my scry focus. Fortunately, before the focus was entirely lost, I was able to make an extremely detailed observation of the creature's digestive tract to add to the demonstration of its lethal effectiveness in combat.

Mazchedeens (tunnel-hunters) are specially bred through the foul sorcery of the Scarlet Brotherhood to fight in the subterranean cavern networks of dwarves and gnomes.

Sleek quadrupeds with powerfully muscled limbs, mazchedeens can run and climb on all fours, but frequently rear onto their back legs to rake foes with their cruelly curved fore-claws. Their long, horse-like heads have

two vestigial eyes and a pair of slit nostrils set above an extensive, fanged maw. Despite being sightless, mazchedeens can navigate and locate foes without difficulty in complete darkness. Tunnel-hunters have extremely thick, rough, pigmented hide, which can change color to blend into the creature's surroundings, making them very difficult to spot when they are motionless.

Mazchedeens are thought to be one of the products of the Scarlet Brotherhood's diabolical monster breeding program. As such, they can understand commands in Ancient Suloise, but only if issued with a priming control phrase, known to the creature's Brotherhood masters alone. Moreover, tunnel-hunters have been conditioned not to initiate combat with humans of pure Suel ancestry—a failsafe to prevent the creatures turning on their creators. It is a mystery how the sightless creatures discern Suel from other humans.

The Brotherhood uses the tunnel-hunters as shock troops to suppress the usually fierce resistance encountered in dwur and noniz settlements. Tales from Irongate and the Hollow Highlands tell of creatures bearing a striking resemblance to mazchedeens wreaking bloody havoc in clanholds and settlements in the years following the Greyhawk Wars. They are also used as "watchdogs" at the gates to sensitive Brotherhood strongholds, where their ability to distinguish non-Suel humans has been the undoing of many a would-be spy.

The reproductive cycle of the mazchedeen is unknown and it is unclear what differences, if any, there are between male and female mazchedeeen.

Mazchedeens have no spoken language, but can comprehend commands issued in Ancient Suloise.

Combat

Mazchedeens are dangerous opponents, capable of using guile and tactics to undo their foes. Alone, they make full use of their climbing ability and natural camouflage to lay in wait and ambush unsuspecting targets, often clinging upside down to the roofs of caves and passages and then dropping onto passing victims. In groups, mazchedeens like to swarm over their enemy, using their climbing ability to move over defensive lines, simultaneously overwhelming them and striking at the vulnerable spell-casters behind. In melee, their primary weapon is their vicious and toothy maw. Mazchedeens also make good use of their front claws, rearing up on their hind legs, or dangling down from cavern roofs to rake their victims. Particularly stubborn foes are dealt with by means of acid, secreted by glands in the creature's throat and spat into the faces of enemies.

Spit Acid (Ex): Mazchedeens can spit a 15-foot-long line of acid once every 1d6 rounds. The acid deals 4d4 points of damage. A successful Reflex save (DC 13) halves the damage. This DC is Constitution-based.

Camouflage (Ex): Due to their rough, pigmented hide, mazchedeens gain a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Suel Failsafe (Ex): Mazchedeens are bred not to attack humans of purely Suel origin, unless attacked first.

Dreamstealer

Medium Undead (Incorporeal)
Hit Dice: 6d12 (39 hp)
Initiative: +7
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (12 squares) (good)
Armor Class: 18 (+3 Dex, +5 deflection)
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/—
Attack: Incoporeal touch +3 melee (1d4 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain)
Full Attack: Incoporeal touch +3 melee (1d4 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Create spawn, wail of doom, wisdom drain
Special Qualities: +2 turn resistance, unnatural aura
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +7
Abilities: Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 20
Skills: Hide +11, Intimidate +13, Listen +10, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +10, Tumble +11
Feats: Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary, gang (2–5), or pack (6–11)
Challenge Rating: 5
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: 7–18 HD (Medium)
Level Adjustment: —

My agent in Irongate has brought to my attention garbled rumors emerging from the Headlands. Explorers have come across strange spirits in the heart of that labyrinth of hills. These spirits can apparently unhinge the minds of those that encounter them, as my contact can well testify to. While he was unsuccessful in his attempts to capture one of these spirits, I was able to piece together a remarkably accurate account of their appearance and behavior from his insane ravings.

Dreamstealers are undead spirits of unknown origin, capable of feeding on the minds of sentient beings, driving their victims insane in the process—those that survive, that is.

Though incorporeal, dreamstealers can manifest themselves as clouds of utter darkness, consisting of a central mass from which continually warping and shifting black

tendrils lash out, often giving the creatures an oddly spider-like appearance. Dreamstealers appear to absorb the light around them, sucking it into their ebon form. They look utterly alien and the sight of them offends the eyes and chills the souls of good-hearted men.

The touch of a dreamstealer is said to bring insanity. Those few that have felt it and lived to tell the tale have been plagued thereafter by terrible nightmares. Dreamstealers can emit a terrible scream that strikes such mortal fear into those that hear it that some die of terror on the spot. They appear to be intelligent and use complex tactics to hunt their prey. Like all undead, they have a burning hatred for all living things.

The origins and purpose of the dreamstealers are unknown. They are mainly encountered in a region of the Headlands known to the local Flan tribes as the Ial Iornadh, the Dreaming Hills (18/H1 on the *Living Greyhawk Gazetteer* map of the Flanaess). These rugged tors are generally avoided by all of the Headlanders, bar a degenerate and evil tribe known as the Galai Iorn. Hated and reviled by the rest of their kindred, the Galai Iorn are said to be in league with the dreamstealers. Though they appeared to be a localized threat, fearsome spirits bearing a striking resemblance to the dreamstealers of the Headlands have been reported to stalk certain accursed ruins in the Bright Desert.

Combat

Dreamstealers are cunning foes, and like to stalk their prey either alone or in packs. They lurk in dark corners of caverns or in tunnel walls, striking at their victims without warning. However, they can also venture out in daylight and delight in herding victims into ambushes and traps in narrow ravines and box canyons. In combat, dreamstealers soften up and scatter potential prey with their dreadful scream. They then swoop in with their tendrils to engulf their victims and feed on their minds.

Create Spawn (Su): Any creature slain by a dreamstealer rises as a dreamstealer spawn under the control of its killer in 1d4 days.

Wisdom Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a dreamstealer's incorporeal touch attack must succeed at a Will save (DC 18) or take 1d6 points of permanent Wisdom drain. The dreamstealer heals 5 points of damage (10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains Wisdom, gaining any excess as temporary hit points. As long as this damage remains, the afflicted individual suffers from terrible nightmares when he rests, and must make a Fortitude save (DC 18) or awaken fatigued. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Wail of Doom (Su): Once per day, a dreamstealer can emit a bloodcurdling wail. All living creatures within a 100-foot spread must make a Will save (DC 18) or take 5d4 points of damage, as well as a –2 morale penalty on saving throws for five rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a dreamstealer at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so. They remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Dreamstealer Spawn (Template)

Dreamstealer spawn are madness made manifest, living creatures consumed by nightmares. Creatures killed by a dreamstealer rise as dreamstealer spawn. Thus, they can take many forms. Dreamstealer spawn appear as inky black clouds that roughly match the form of their original body, from which ebon tendrils constantly writhe.

Dreamstealer spawn can speak the languages they knew in life, but their voices sound high pitched, distorted, and tortured.

Sample Dreamstealer Spawn

Dreamstealer Spawn Hobgoblin Warı
Medium Undead (Augmented Humanoid, Incorporeal)
Hit Dice: 1d12 (6 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (12 squares) (good)
Armor Class: 13 (+1 Dex, +2 deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 12
Base Attack/Grapple: +0/—
Attack: Incorporeal touch +0 melee (1d4 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain)
Full Attack: Incorporeal touch +0 melee (1d4 plus 1d6 Wisdom drain)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Wail of doom, wisdom drain
Special Qualities: +2 turn resistance, darkvision 60 ft., hobgoblin traits, unnatural aura
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0
Abilities: Str —, Dex 13, Con —, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14
Skills: Hide +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Spot +3
Feats: Alertness
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary, gang (2–5), or pack (6–11)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral evil
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: —

The dreamstealer spawn hobgoblin lurks in ruined hobgoblin villages and ambushes anyone brave enough to explore the haunted buildings.

Combat

Although the dreamstealer spawn hobgoblin retains its prior weapon proficiencies, it almost always fights with its incoporeal touch attack and any special attacks or spells it possessed while living. Even when *ghost touch* weapons are available, the dreamstealer spawn hobgoblin prefers to fight with its deadly touch.

Wail of Doom (Sp): Once per day, the dreamstealer spawn hobgoblin may emit a bloodcurdling scream. All those within a 100-foot spread must make a Will save (DC 12) or suffer 5d4 points of damage as well as a –2 morale penalty on saving throws for 1 round.

Wisdom Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a dreamstealer spawn's incorporeal touch attack must succeed at a Will save (DC 12) or suffer 1d6 points of permanent Wisdom drain. As long as this damage remains, the afflicted individual suffers from terrible nightmares when he rests, and must make a Fortitude save (DC 12) or awaken fatigued. The dreamstealer heals 5 points of damage (10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains Wisdom, gaining any excess as temporary hit points.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a dreamstealer spawn hobgoblin at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so. They remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Creating a Dreamstealer spawn

"Dreamstealer spawn" is a template that can be applied to any living corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the "base creature"). It uses the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Size and Type: The creature's type changes to undead, and it gains the incoporeal subtype. Size is unchanged. Do not recalculate base attack bonus or saves.

Hit Dice: All the base creature's Hit Dice become d12s. Do not increase class Hit Dice.

Speed: Dreamstealer spawn gain a fly speed of 60 feet (good), unless the base creature has a better fly speed.

Armor Class: The dreamstealer spawn loses any natural amour bonus the base creature possesses, but it gains a deflection bonus equal to its Charisma bonus or +1, whichever is higher.

Attacks: The dreamstealer spawn retains all the attacks of the base creature, although those that rely on physical contact become incorporeal touch attacks.

Damage: The dreamstealer spawn's incorporeal touch attack deals 1d4 points of damage as well as any damage from its special attacks (see below).

Special Attacks: The dreamstealer spawn retains all the special attacks of the base creature, except those that rely on physical contact. A dreamstealer spawn gains the wisdom drain and wail of doom abilities described below. Saves have a DC of 10 + 1/2 dreamstealer spawn HD + dreamstealer spawn Charisma modifier unless noted otherwise.

Wisdom Drain (Su): Living creatures hit by a dreamstealer spawn's incorporeal touch attack must succeed at a Will save or suffer 1d6 points of permanent Wisdom drain. As long as this damage remains, the afflicted individual suffers from terrible nightmares when he rests, and must make a Fortitude save or awaken fatigued. The dreamstealer spawn heals 5 points of damage (10 on a critical hit) whenever it drains Wisdom, gaining any excess as temporary hit points.

Wail of Doom (Sp): Once per day, the dreamstealer spawn may emit a bloodcurdling scream. All those within a 100-foot spread must make a Will save or suffer 5d4 points of damage or 1d4 points of damage per dreamstealer spawn Hit Dice, whichever is greater. Affected creatures also suffer a -2 morale penalty on saving throws for 1 round per dreamstealer spawn Hit Dice.

Special Qualities: A dreamstealer spawn has all the special qualities of the base creature and the two listed below.

Unnatural Aura (Su): Both wild and domesticated animals can sense the unnatural presence of a dreamstealer spawn at a distance of 30 feet. They do not willingly approach nearer than that and panic if forced to do so. They remain panicked as long as they are within that range.

Turn Resistance (Ex): A dreamstealer spawn has +2 turn resistance.

Saves: Same as the base creature

Abilities: Same as the base creature, except that the dreamstealer spawn has no Strength or Constitution score, and its Charisma score increases by +4.

Skills: Same as the base creature

Feats: Same as the base creature

Environment: Any land

Organization: Solitary, gang (2–5), or pack (6–11)

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature +2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral evil

Advancement: Same as the base creature

Level Adjustment: —

Overseer

Tiny Aberration
Hit Dice: 2d8 (9 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
Armor Class: 15 (+2 size, +2 Dex, +1 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 13
Base Attack/Grapple: +1/–9
Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d4–2)
Full Attack: Bite +5 melee (1d4–2)
Space/Reach: 2 1/2 ft./0 ft.
Special Attacks: Attach, death grip, *domination*
Special Qualities: *Invisibility*
Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +3
Abilities: Str 6, Dex 14, Con 11, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 18
Skills: Climb +1, Hide +13 (+18 when attached), Move Silently +5, Search +4, Spot +3
Feats: Weapon Finesse
Environment: Any land
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 1
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always lawful neutral
Advancement: 3–6 HD (Small)
Level Adjustment: —

My agents have sent me the preserved corpse of Quarrad, a steward of the Trine of Ountsy who attempted to slay his mistress. Needless to say, I was delighted by the opportunity to study the novel insectoid creature that I discovered still clinging to his shoulder. It appears to induce a pleasing subservience in those it infests. Experiments are afoot to find the precise parts of the human brain that the beast acts on, so that I might replicate them. I have tried repeatedly to scry Hesuel Ilshar to find the breeding ground of these parasites, but to no avail. Unfortunate, as I believe in addition to their magical properties, these creatures would make a rather tasty delicacy!

The overseer is an insectoid parasite that enforces the will of the Scarlet Sign upon those it infests.

The ever-industrious priests of Bralm created the overseers using a fell ritual to shape sacred ants to their insidious ends. Through the will of the Toiling Lady, these creatures become horrors used to dominate and control the weak-minded. Often, if an ally or dupe of the Scarlet Sign shows any sign of discontent or excessive self-will, the red brothers attempt to implant one of these fell creatures onto the unwitting victim.

The overseer resembles a red-hued ant, with a pair of elongated biting pincers and six often-writhing feelers. Its sole purpose is to latch onto the body of its intended victim with its pincers. Once the overseer bites its victim, it can exert a *domination* effect through its feelers. The overseer's ability to become invisible at will when attached to a victim is its chief defense mechanism. Its last line of defense is the death grip of the feelers. Removing the overseer from a *dominated* victim may in fact kill the unfortunate host.

Overseers speak Common and Ancient Suloise.

Combat

These vicious creatures are usually concealed within the robes of their scarlet masters. They are most effective against unarmored and sleeping victims, but have a remarkable affinity for hiding and striking from ambush. Generally, an attached overseer prefers to remain invisible, but if this is not possible it attempts to hide on its victim's body or in its clothing, never losing contact with its victim. If forced into melee, overseers tend to flee, having little offensive capability when surprise is not on their side.

Attach (Ex): If an overseer hits a victim with its biting pincers, it automatialy attaches itself to the victim's body. An attached overseer loses its Dexterity bonus to its Armor Class and is considered flat-footed.

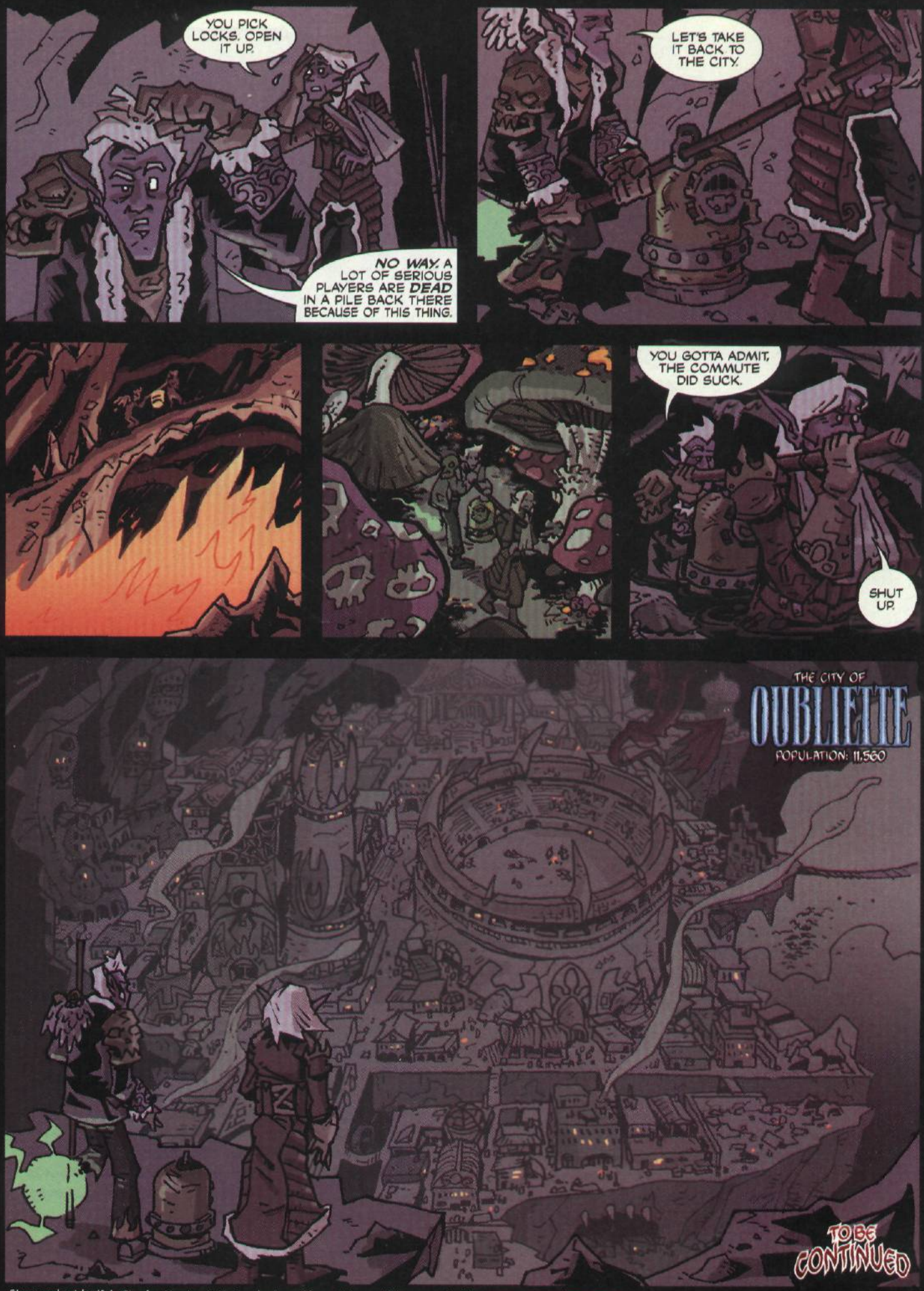
Death Grip (Su): After it has successfully attached itself to a victim, killing or removing the overseer can also slay the host. If the overseer is killed or removed, it inflicts on its host 1d6 points of damage per hour it has been attached (minimum of 1d6 and maximum of 10d6). This damage is raw magical damage and not subject to damage reduction or energy resistance. A successful Fortitude saving throw (DC 11) halves the damage done. This save DC is Constitution-based.

***Domination* (Su)**: An attached overseer may attempt to *dominate* its victim using its feelers. The victim must make a Will save (DC 15), or be *dominated* as per the *dominate monster* spell. The link between host and overseer is telepathic. This save DC is Charisma-based.

***Invisibility* (Su)**: The overseer, when attached to a host, can become invisible, as per the spell *invisibility*, as a free action. Every time the overseer issues an order to a *dominated* host, the overseer must make a Will save (DC 10) to avoid becoming visible.

Skills: Overseers gain a +5 circumstance bonus to Hide checks while attached to a host. ●

"DOWNER CAN'T BE TRUSTED. HE'S A LOOSE CANNON." THANKS A LOT, YOU ASS.
YOU'RE LUCKY I PUT YOUR STUMP IN STASIS. REMEMBER, THAT'S $50.
WELL, THE UNDERDARK IS A DANGEROUS PLACE. BEST WE STICK TOGETHER.
BUT IF YOU WEREN'T MY BROTHER, ARISTIDE, I *SWEAR* I WOULD HAVE KILLED YOU YEARS AGO.
FLAP FLAP FLAP
WHA!? BACK TO FINISH ME OFF, WENCH?
plink
THUP
I GOTS THE--
THUP
ULOLOK
THUP
BOYS!
AAIII! THAT IMP WAS MY *FAMILIAR!*
MMM, I RECKON SO. TELL YOU WHAT. I OWE YOU $75.
SO THAT'S WHAT THOSE BOUNTY HUNTERS WERE AFTER. WEIRD.
I GUESS THE LITTLE SNOT MADE GOOD.


YOU PICK LOCKS. OPEN IT UP.
NO WAY. A LOT OF SERIOUS PLAYERS ARE DEAD IN A PILE BACK THERE BECAUSE OF THIS THING.
LET'S TAKE IT BACK TO THE CITY.
YOU GOTTA ADMIT, THE COMMUTE DID SUCK.
SHUT UP.
THE CITY OF
OUBLIETTE
POPULATION: 11,560
TO BE CONTINUED

Story and art by **Kyle Stanley Hunter.** Lettering by **Sean Glenn.** A **Super Unicorn** production. **www.superunicorn.com**

STAR WARS®

ROLEPLAYING GAME

Ord Vaxal:
Prison Planet of the Empire

By Gary Astleford
Illustrations by James Ryman and Tommy Lee Edwards
Cartography by Jeff Carlisle and Kyle Hunter

Sitting quietly on the periphery of the Inner Rim, Ord Vaxal is a dumping ground for the living garbage that litters the Empire. Those unlucky enough to find themselves confined to this mysterious penal colony are seldom heard from again. In the days of the Old Republic, Ord Vaxal was home to several correctional facilities, ranging from psychiatric institutions to maximum security lock-downs. A planet-wide jailbreak twenty years prior to the Rebellion Era led to worldwide anarchy, and has given the prisoners an unusual degree of illusory freedom that is restricted only by Ord Vaxal's azure skies.

Approaching Ord Vaxal

Ord Vaxal possesses several great oceans, which surround three large continents and several remote island chains. The continents are covered in alternating rain forests and plains, and while the polar regions consist of cold tundra, the rest of the planet is temperate year-round. Due to a mild axial tilt, Ord Vaxal's seasons are not intense, and seasonal changes are not dramatic. The planet's deep blue skies stretch over aquamarine plains and forests.

Aside from fresh water and several varieties of native hardwood, Ord Vaxal lacks much in the way of natural resources. Tin, lead, and copper can be found in limited quantities, but the planet lacks most other ores. Herds of wild nerfs, rontos, eopies, and small jungle banthas (similar to those from Kashyyyk) roam the grassy plains, having been imported by the Republic for their meat, milk, and skins. Ord Vaxal is also home to several indigenous creatures, including small amphibians called risps and menacing reptiles known as trighas.

Risps

Domesticated long ago by Republic colonists, risps are amphibious, dog-like scavengers that are sometimes trained for use as guard animals. About the size of greyhounds, they have yellow-green skin, wide mouths encrusted with serrated teeth, and six strong limbs that end in webbed feet tipped with jagged claws. In the wild, they hunt singly or in small family units. When alarmed or attacking, risps emit gurgling hisses and shrieks.

Risp: Jungle Scavenger 2; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 13 (+2 Dex, +1 size); Spd 14 m; VP/WP 1/6; Atk +0 melee (1d4–1, bite), or +0 melee (1d2–1 claws), or +3 ranged; SQ Breathe Underwater, Darkvision 30', Run-By Attack, Scent; SV Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +1; SZ S (1 meter long); Face/Reach 2 m by 2 m/2 m; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 6, Int 3, Wis 12, Cha 2. Challenge Code A.

Skills: Hide +8, Listen +3, Move Silently +4, Spot +3, Survival +3, Swim +5.

Feats: None.

Trighas

Trighas are a species of large predatory reptiles that hunt the jungles of Ord Vaxal. They have green, scaly hides, mottled with dark stripes and spots. Hunting in family units, they bellow as they crash through the underbrush, seeking to flush out prey. When a potential meal is seen, a trigha lets loose with

a high-pitched shriek, alerting its pack. Trighas chase prey single-mindedly and with little regard to their own safety.

Trigha: Jungle Predator 5; Init +0; Defense 14 (–2 size, +6 natural); Spd 14 m; VP/WP 32/44; Atk +10 melee (2d8+7, bite), or +3 ranged; SQ Low-light Vision, +4 species bonus to Survival (jungle) skill checks; SV Fort +13, Ref +4, Will +2; SZ H (6 meters long); Face/Reach 4 m by 10 m/4 m; Str 25, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 8. Challenge Code C.

Skills: Intimidate +2, Jump +10, Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Survival +5, Spot +4.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Track.

A Prison Without Bars

The Old Republic settled Ord Vaxal for use as a penal colony. Prisons of all types dotted the surface of the planet, staffed by specialists and numerous prison guards. Planetary policy allowed the correctional staff to bring their families with them, and small colonial settlements sprang up around individual facilities in support of the civilian population. At the colony's height, the ratio of prisoners to correctional employees, civilians, and their families was nearly ten to one.

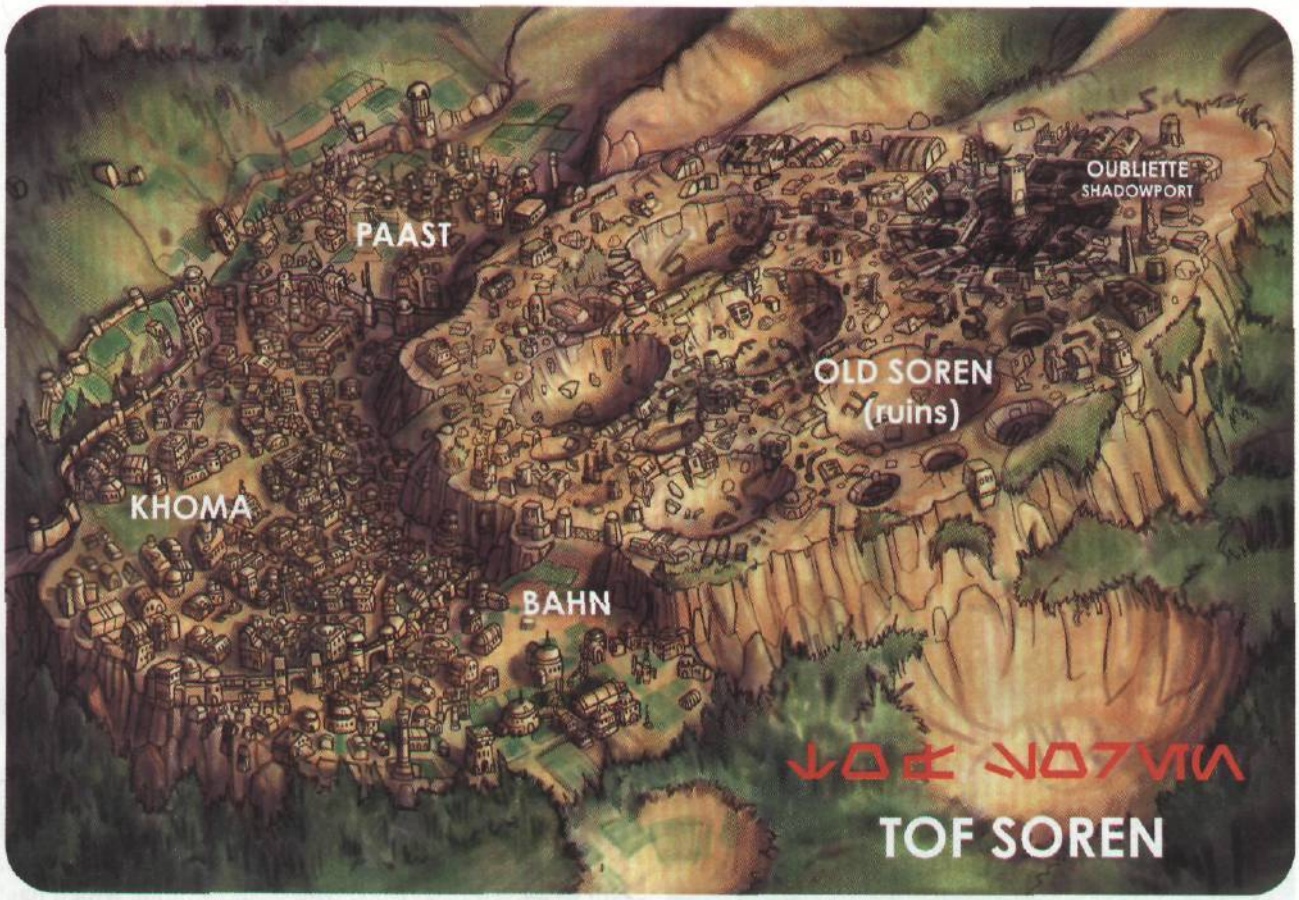
Anyone could see the high potential for disaster, even though previous disturbances amongst the prisoners had always been easily quelled. Possibility became reality when a chain gang from a medium-security facility overpowered their guards. News of the resistance spread quickly amongst both convicts and guards alike, spurring further mutinies in other prisons on a planet-wide basis. Between the complacency of the authorities and the increasing organization of the prisoners, things quickly spiraled out of control.

After two weeks of continued rebellion, armies of angry convicts advanced on the planet's largest starports, intending to leave Ord Vaxal at all costs. Republic naval forces arrived to suppress the uprising, but were hindered by the bureaucracy and red tape so common in the Old Republic. The prisoners were deeply entrenched by the time an effective blockade could be established around the planet, and Republic officials feared that sending in ground troops would only escalate the violence. In order to prevent prisoners from leaving the system, the orbiting Republic fleet heavily bombarded Ord Vaxal's starports. While a few convicts managed to escape in the ensuing chaos, most remained stranded on the planet's surface.

Several years of anarchy followed. Bands of escaped prisoners turned upon each other when it became apparent that their new-found freedom was limited to the surface of the planet. Roving groups of brigands, led by petty warlords, set up small kingdoms, ruling their fiefs from the very prison facilities that they had escaped years earlier. Despite the anarchy, a tenuous peace eventually settled over the colony.

The Republic navy kept a wary eye on the events transpiring on the planet below. In the years following what was commonly known as the "Jailbreak," Republic pickets remained in orbit on a rotating basis. Not only was this security intended to prevent prisoners from escaping, it was also necessary to keep other ne'er-do-wells from landing on the planet.

When Palpatine came to power, he doubled the strength of the orbital garrison and decreed that Ord Vaxal would henceforth be used as a depository for rebels, political dis-



sidents, and other criminals. In the Rebellion era, Imperial prison ships continuously arrive at Ord Vaxal. The ships' prisoners are ferried to the planet's surface and left to fend for themselves. The severity of a convict's crime has no bearing on the matter, and once marooned on the planet's surface, there can be no reprieve or parole.

Tof Soren

The shantytown of Tof Soren was established two years after the Jailbreak by a loose confederation of escaped prisoners and civilian workers who had been abandoned on Ord Vaxal. In the years since the Jailbreak, it has grown into the largest single settlement in the region, capable of limited industry and supporting some five thousand residents. Chief among Tof Soren's exports to neighboring communities are dyed cloth woven from the fur of local nerfs, cultivated grains, and slugthrowers. In fact, most of the firearms in use on Ord Vaxal were created by artisans living in Tof Soren.

Built on the outskirts of Soren, an old penal spaceport that was blasted to rubble by the Republic fleet after the Jailbreak, Tof Soren is comprised of a combination of makeshift shanties (constructed from scavenged building materials) and newer structures made from orange brick and blue-gray stone. Although backward by galactic standards, the people of Tof Soren live relatively well considering the state of anarchy on their planet.

Local law is enforced on a neighborhood-by-neighborhood basis, and several different law enforcement agencies (which are more akin to rival gangs than to police departments) hold sway in different areas of the city. There is no central government, though gang representatives meet occasionally to discuss important issues. The different gangs refuse to cooperate under most circumstances, but will band together to repel larger threats to the town as a whole.

Each of the town's three neighborhoods, Khorma, Bahn, and Paast, feature their own residential, market, and business districts. Khorma is by far the largest of the three, spanning well into the outskirts of Old Soren (as the spaceport ruins are known to locals). Bahn and Paast are nearly as large together as Khorma is by itself, and they control the majority of the town's food resources. Fighting between the three neighborhoods was rampant four years ago, but an unsteady peace has since been established.

Much of the city's transportation is based on nerf-drawn wagons, smaller "jungle" banthas, and rontos. Rontos have adapted well to Ord Vaxal's climate; several known herds of the beasts roam wild in the outlying countryside.

The Khorma Weapon Market

Ord Vaxal's most famous weapon emporium is nestled amid the farmer's markets and clothing stalls of Khorma. Most of the slugthrowers traded here are manufactured locally. The guns lack a standard caliber, with each gunsmith choosing his own in order to create a captive market for ammunition (which is often more expensive than the slugthrowers themselves). A limited supply of blaster

Ord Vaxal

Planet Type: Terrestrial
Climate: Warm to arctic
Terrain: Rainforests, oceans, grassy plains
Atmosphere: Breathable
Gravity: Standard
Diameter: 11,254 km
Length of Day: 25 standard hours
Length of Year: 288 standard days
Sentient Species: Human, many alien species (inmates)
Languages: Basic
Population: 180,000+ inmates estimated worldwide
Species Mix: 64% Human, 36% other
Government: Anarchy/Feudal
Major Exports: None
Major Imports: Criminals
System/Star: Vaxal

Planets	Type	Moons
Thira	Searing Rock	1
Caprol	Barren Rock	0
Irfan	Gas Giant	7
Ord Vaxal	Terrestrial	1
Pheon	Barren Rock	2

weapons is also available, if the right questions are asked (requiring a DC 20 Gather Information check). Many of these blasters lack power sources or the means to recharge them, and most are over 20 years old. Without the technology to keep them in good repair, blaster weapons are viewed as nothing more than expensive artifacts by most inhabitants of Ord Vaxal.

Full-scale mining on Ord Vaxal is nearly unheard of. The planet has never been rich in ores of any kind, although tin, lead, and copper can be found in limited quantities. Areas and settlements with significant deposits of these metals are held in high esteem, if not envied outright, by local warlords. Control of such resources has sparked several bloody conflicts. Because of the rarity of ore on Ord Vaxal, metal scraps are highly-prized by everyone, and trade is often accomplished with salvaged metal objects. Brave and foolhardy scavengers often venture into the ruins of the Soren spaceport in search of metal scraps or a piece of pipe. Many never return, which lends credence to the myths that the ruins are haunted.

Weapons in Tof Soren

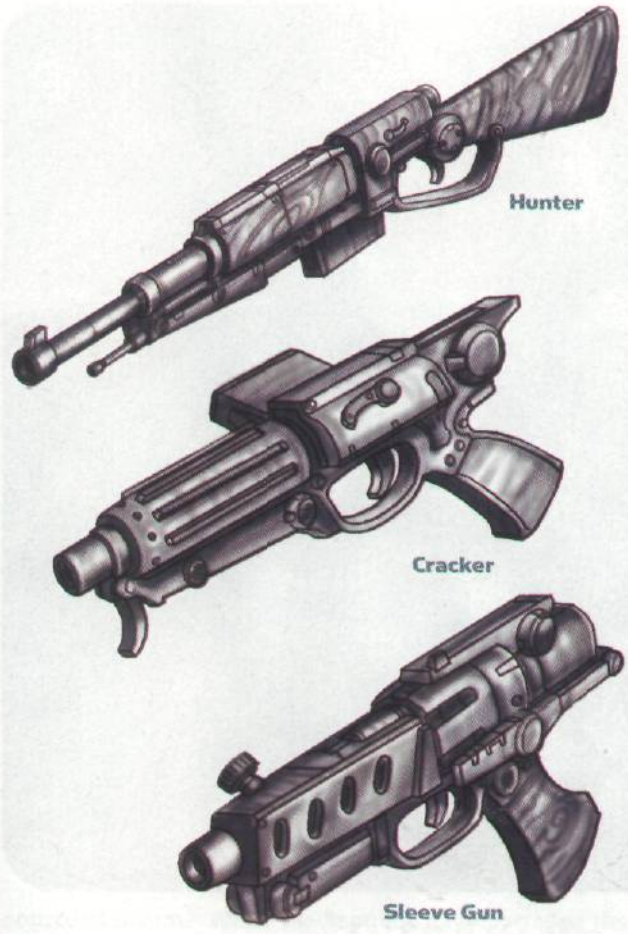
Slugthrowers have become a vital accessory in Tof Soren, and nearly every citizen carries at least one. They are seen as a form of jewelry, with those of higher station carrying ornately decorated weapons. The smiths of Tof Soren primarily produce three types of firearms: sleeve guns, crackers, and hunters. Although the terminology remains the same between weapons from different artisans, the appearance and ammunition used by different guns can vary wildly.

Sorenese firearms are constructed from as many natural resources as possible. This means that locally-available hardwoods are incorporated into designs, making them appear somewhat rustic by galactic standards. The larger the weapon, the more likely it is that a significant portion will be carved from wood. The Carver's Guild, which has become an important element in Tof Soren's politics, is solely responsible for regulating and producing grips, stocks, and other weapon-related materials. Those gun makers who do not belong to the Carver's Guild often employ at least one artisan who does.

Guns are identified by the name of their designers, with Fassa, Gules, Sachra, and Toddle being four of the largest gunsmiths in Tof Soren. Gunsmiths create the metallic components of the weapons, such as the barrels, locks, receivers, and trigger assemblies, from bits of scrap metal found in the ruins of the Soren spaceport. They smelt down locally-collected copper and zinc, using it to make brass for bullet casings. The gunsmiths also manufacture lead projectiles and gunpowder. In the long term, bullets are the most expensive component, and manufacturers recognize that guns are little better than clubs without them.

Listed costs reflect the values of such weapons to the galactic community at large. In Tof Soren, prices are variable, based on barter, and must be negotiated through haggling. Goods and services are routinely traded for functional slugthrowers and ammunition. If these weapons were somehow exported off-world, compatible ammunition could be easily and cheaply fabricated.

Tof Soren Hideout Pistol ("Sleeve Gun")
Weapon Type: Slugthrower Pistol
Proficiency Group: Slugthrowers **Cost:** 100
Damage: 2d4–1 **Critical:** 20



Range Increment: 2 m **Weight:** .5 kilograms
Fort DC: — **Type:** Piercing
Multifire/Autofire: — **Size:** Tiny
Hardness: 4 **WP:** 2 **Break DC:** 12
Availability: Rare, Licensed **Era:** RotE
Special: This weapon fires 2 shots before it must be reloaded. It uses a 2-shot internal magazine, which takes 1 round to reload. The bullets are inserted individually. Referred to as "sleeve guns" by the population of Tof Soren, the typical hideout pistol uses an 8mm-diameter bullet (though this varies by manufacturer).

Tof Soren Slugthrower Pistol ("Cracker")
Weapon Type: Slugthrower Pistol
Proficiency Group: Slugthrowers **Cost:** 200
Damage: 2d6+1 **Critical:** 20
Range Increment: 10 m **Weight:** 1.6 kilograms
Fort DC: — **Type:** Piercing
Multifire/Autofire: M **Size:** Small
Hardness: 5 **WP:** 2 **Break DC:** 15
Availability: Rare, Licensed **Era:** RotE
Special: This weapon fires 7 shots before it must be reloaded. It uses a 7-shot internal magazine, which takes 4 rounds to reload. Called "crackers" due to their distinctive rapport, the typical pistol in Tof Soren has a top-loading internal magazine that must be reloaded one bullet at a time. The average bullet diameter is somewhere between 10mm and 11mm.

Tof Soren Hunting Rifle ("Hunter")
Weapon Type: Slugthrower Rifle
Proficiency Group: Slugthrowers **Cost:** 300
Damage: 2d8+2 **Critical:** 20
Range Increment: 30 m **Weight:** 4.2 kilograms
Fort DC: — **Type:** Piercing
Multifire/Autofire: — **Size:** Medium
Hardness: 5 **WP:** 5 **Break DC:** 18
Availability: Rare, Licensed **Era:** RotE
Special: This weapon fires 5 shots before it must be reloaded. It uses a 5-shot internal magazine that takes 3 rounds to reload. Like the typical cracker, the hunting rifle (or "hunter") uses a top-loaded internal magazine. Equipped only with iron sights, hunters can be modified with simple telescopic sights that span the length of the weapon's barrel (add 100 credits to the weapon's base cost). This scope negates range penalties for the first two range increments, though this does not extend the weapon's maximum range. The weapon uses a bullet of approximately 6mm in diameter, with a large powder charge behind it.

The People of Tof Soren

With more than 5,000 residents, Tof Soren is one of the largest single settlements on the face of Ord Vaxal. Local fashion includes homespun robes, trousers, and colorfully-embroidered vests and shirts, with buttons made from carved wood or polished bone. Diverse alien species inhabit the city, although the majority of the residents are human. No one purpose unites the citizens of Tof Soren, unless it is the fact that they are all serving life sentences with no possibility of redemption.

By necessity, Tof Soren is a tough town. While "peacekeepers" maintain an uneasy peace within their individual neighborhoods during the light of day, the nights are lawless and best spent indoors.

Tandy, Transport Specialist

Tandy was a civilian transport operator prior to the Jail Break. He's much older now, balding and gray, but there's still a certain "spark" about him. He figures he'll probably end up dying on Ord Vaxal, but he intends to have fun doing it. His prized possession is his repulsortruck, which he's kept in good working order since the Jail Break.

Tandy is a human in his late fifties who dresses in stained overalls and has a balding head. What little hair he has is gray, long, and tied back in a loose, scraggly pony tail that hangs to his mid-back. A floppy, broad-brimmed cap shields his hazel eyes from Ord Vaxal's sun. He wears a cracker in a brown leather gunbelt around his waist, but doesn't like to use it unless he has no other choice.

Tandy: Male Human Fringer 4; Init +2 (Dex); Defense 16 (+2 Dex, +4 class); Spd 10; VP/WP 30/15; Atk +3 melee (1d3, fist), or +5 ranged (2d6+1, slugthrower pistol); SQ Bonus class skills (Repair, Treat Injury), barter, jury-rig +2; SV Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +2; SZ M; FP 0; Rep +0; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 12. Challenge Code C.

Equipment: Repulsortruck, "cracker" slugthrower pistol, old greasy overalls, floppy-brimmed cap.

Skills: Climb +1, Gamble +3, Hide +4, Jump +1, Knowledge (Ord Vaxal) +3, Listen +3, Pilot +11, Profession (mechanic) +5, Profession (repulsortruck driver) +5, Read/Write Basic, Repair +5, Search +1, Speak Basic, Spot +3, Survival +7, Treat Injury +3.

Feats: Dodge, Rugged, Skill Emphasis (Pilot), Weapon Group Proficiencies (primitive weapons, simple weapons, slugthrowers).

Tandy's Repulsortruck

The antiquated repulsortruck that has become Tandy's hallmark is a miracle of Ubrikkian engineering. Much of the metal and alloy siding has been completely stripped from the vehicle, leaving a skeleton-like chassis paneled with slats of wood and tightly-woven rattan. The large cab seats two, in addition to Tandy, and four more passengers can ride in the truck's bed (at their own risk, of course). Tandy uses his repulsortruck to earn a living, transporting cargo and passengers to their destinations.

Ubrikkian ST-101 Repulsortruck

Class: Speeder (Ground)
Size: Large (5 meters long)
Passengers: 6
Cargo Capacity: 1,000 kg
Speed: 75 m
Max Velocity: 220 km/h
Cost: 12,500 (new), 3,000 (used)
Crew: 1 (unique)
Initiative: +10 (–1 size, +11 crew)
Maneuver: +10 (–1 size, +11 crew)
Defense: 15* (–1 size, +6 armor)
Shield Points: 0
Hull Points: 33 (DR 5)

**Provides full cover to crew, and half cover to passengers.*

Peacekeepers

The neighborhood syndicates keep their streets safe by employing peacekeepers (referred to as "enforcers" by locals). The peacekeepers patrol in groups of three, are armed with crackers, and wear armor composed of light alloys, boiled leather, and scavenged materials. There are no established uniforms, but each peacekeeper is given a badge of rank that identifies his allegiance.

Khorma peacekeepers are better equipped than those of the other neighborhoods, and pin a small black disk to their chests. The enforcers from Bahn carry heavy clubs and cudgels in addition to their crackers, and are identified by purple diamond-shaped tattoos below their eyes. Paast is possibly the toughest of Tof Soren's neighborhoods, and the peacekeepers there take no prisoners. Paast peacekeepers are distinguished by tightly-braided red cords worn around the neck.

Tof Soren's peacekeepers, regardless of their neighborhoods, use the statistics for low-level thugs (see the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* Revised Core Rulebook, page 355), but replace Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster pistols) with Weapon Group Proficiency (slugthrowers).

The Oubliette Shadowport

In the time between the Jailbreak and Palpatine's rise to power, the Hutts took notice of Ord Vaxal's potential as a

source of income. While the Republic navy patrolled the space above the planet, it did so sporadically and without much vigor. This allowed the Hutts to send in scouts to verify that Ord Vaxal was a veritable treasure trove brimming with the forgotten and unwanted members of galactic society. In other words, it was a rich source of slaves.

Hutt representatives were quick to establish a small stronghold within the still-smoldering ruins of the Soren starport. Their movements were careful and deliberate, so as not to attract the attention of either the Republic navy or the prisoners on the planet's surface. Considering that the ruin of the bombed-out spaceport was several kilometers across, keeping the shadowport hidden from Ord Vaxal's population was easier than it might at first appear. Keeping the comings and goings of the Hutts' transports from the Republic picket vessels was another matter entirely.

Oubliette, as the shadowport came to be called, sits on the northern rim of Old Soren. Several of the original docking bays have been excavated, allowing accommodations for several small or medium freighters. In the years prior to the Emperor's New Order, the Hutts wasted no time in renovating a small portion of the old starport. The majority of the facility is subterranean, and the few portions that remain exposed to the surface are cleverly designed to blend in with the surrounding ruin. Taking advantage of local superstitions in order to maintain secrecy, transports take off and land only at night. Most locals believe that the starport ruins are haunted and tainted with dangerous amounts of residual radiation.

Oubliette boasts all the comforts of home. Cantinas, brothels, and brokers of all sorts have their places within the shadowport's community, and their employees work hard to separate the pirates, smugglers, and slavers who frequent the place from their credits. A portion of the facility is dedicated to what the Hutts refer to as "cargo processing," where slaves are scanned, cleaned up, and appraised. Those with special skills are singled out and tagged. Regardless of a slave's final destination, all receive a restraint implant before being prepared for loading onto the next available transport to Hutt space, where they are invariably forced into some form of backbreaking labor.

The Hutts' agents collect slaves via several different means. Press gangs kidnap explorers as they comb the starport ruins for valuable scrap. Some slavers leave particularly valuable pieces of salvage exposed within the ruined starport as bait. A more insidious method of capturing slaves involves sending out press gangs disguised as natives. The gangs disperse into groups of two or three, and comb the area in search of potential targets. Victims are lured away from their homes by promises of a life far away from Ord Vaxal.

Slaves aren't the only commodities to come out of Oubliette. The compound's underground marketplaces see the trade of all manner of black market goods. Weapons, spice, stolen goods, dangerous or endangered creatures, and illegal cybernetics are all available. In fact, Oubliette features a laboratory responsible for the development of new cybernetic devices, such as the Huttese restraint

implant (see below). Captured slaves who are not fit for export are used as guinea pigs in horrible experiments in order to test newly-developed cybernetic systems. The Hutts also use the shadowport to hide away "hot" items and individuals, sometimes for months or years at a time. Ord Vaxal is like a secret Huttese lock-box, protected by the finest Imperial security that truguts can buy.

Huttese Restraint Implants ("Bio Bolts")

Based on the restraining bolts so often used on droids, restraint implants represent a new Huttese approach to controlling organic slaves and prisoners. Installed at the base of a slave's skull. This small cybernetic device taps directly into the portions of the brain that control pleasure, pain, and motor control. It is typically installed with a "tagger," a device that resembles a large pistol.

With the use of a hand-held wand, or "slave caller," a slave can be punished, rewarded, or struck immobile at his master's whim. Most hand-held slave callers have a range limited only by line of sight, but there are larger models that can transmit signals to individual implants up to 1,000 kilometers away. The slave caller is a slim remote, studded with buttons. Some are designed with aesthetics in mind, resembling the scepters of kings, while others resemble walking sticks or canes.

When activated, the slave caller can be used to punish or reward slaves. There are three punishment settings available. The lowest of these causes slight discomfort, while the highest can kill if left active for too long (see Table 1–1). When activated, the slave must succeed at a Fortitude save, or be incapacitated by the pain for 1d4+1 rounds. Regardless of whether the save is successful, the slave suffers the listed damage.

Table 1–1: Restraint Implant Punishment Settings

Punishment Setting	Fort Save DC	Damage
Low	10	None
Medium	15	1d2 Vitality
High	20	1d6 Vitality

Slave callers also can be used to reward slaves by stimulating the pleasure centers of their brains. Such a use gives the slave a brief feeling of pleasure and well-being. A slave who is rewarded on a regular basis can become addicted to such positive reinforcement. Many will do anything for their masters if they can expect to be rewarded in this manner.

The third function of a slave caller can paralyze a slave, rendering him unable to move or speak. Although this setting will not harm the target directly, the feeling of helplessness caused by this paralysis can be just as bad as the pain of being punished. A paralyzed slave can attempt a Will save (DC 25) in order to move or speak, and a successful save must be made each round in which the slave wishes to take an action. Paralyzed slaves are considered to be helpless targets.

Slaves can attempt to remove their bio bolts. An implant must be either surgically removed, or pried forcefully from the slave. If surgically removed, the operation inflicts 1d4 points of wound damage. If pried free, the damage is increased to 1d8 wound points. A successful Treat Injury skill check (DC 15) reduces this damage by half. Tampering with the implant causes it to emit an agonizing pulse that incapacitates the slave unless a successful Fortitude save (DC 20) is made. If the Fortitude save is unsuccessful, this pulse knocks the slave unconscious for 1d4+1 rounds.

Install DC: 5

Common Side Effects: Pain Sensitivity. If improperly installed, a restraint implant can make even minor discomfort feel like intense agony. If injured, a character affected by this side effect must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 5 plus the amount of damage suffered) or be stunned for one round.

DR/Wounds: 0/4

Price: 25 credits

The Imperial Presence Grows

When Emperor Palpatine rose to power, the blockade in orbit around Ord Vaxal increased in strength. Corvettes and older dreadnaughts were routed to the Vaxal system to perform picket duty. The increased military presence, coupled with dozens of spy satellites and two Golan defense platforms, created a dense sensor net over the planetary surface. If so much as a mynock attempted to breech Ord Vaxal's atmosphere, the Empire would know about it. This expanded level of security brought the Huttese operations in the Oubliette shadowport to a halt.

Each day marked more lost revenue, which spurred the normally patient Hutts to react quickly. Hutt operatives contacted Adria Reyn, the sector moff, and made her a deal she couldn't refuse. Whether this consisted of bribes, blackmail, or both, no one can say. Within hours, the sensor net around Ord Vaxal had been slightly rearranged. This reorganization of the planet's security allowed for a very narrow access corridor leading directly to the Oubliette shadowport.

Over the past few years, the Huttese efforts to undermine the Imperial blockade have remained successful. Moff Reyn has expanded upon her position of authority within the sector, while simultaneously providing a shining example of Imperial duplicity and corruption. So long as she sticks to her part of the bargain, the Hutts are content to rake in the truguts as scheduled transports brimming with slaves make the short trip from the Vaxal System into Hutt Space.

Threading the Needle

Making the journey to Oubliette requires very careful system navigation at predetermined speeds. A low profile must be maintained by reducing a ship's power expenditure below operational limits, with precise course changes being made at very specific intervals. Even slight deviation from this course results in potential detection by Imperial pickets, with disastrous results. The Hutts are

reluctant to give this course information to smugglers or slavers that have not yet proven themselves. Because of this, the existence of the Oubliette shadowport remains one of their best-kept secrets.

Careful scrutiny of the Imperial sensor net can reveal that there are gaps and imperfections in Ord Vaxal's planetary defenses. Analyzing this information requires a Knowledge (technology) skill check (DC 30). If the analyst has specific knowledge of Imperial security protocols within the system, access to schedules, or other related information, he receives a +5 circumstance bonus on this skill roll. Even with this information, "threading the needle" from the edge of the Vaxal system to the docking bays of Oubliette requires a Pilot skill check (DC 30). Pilots who possess the specific course information provided by the Hutts gain a +10 competence bonus on this roll.

The Powers Behind Oubliette

Oubliette was the brainchild of Sassallo, a Hutt of the Besadii clan. She had always had her stubby fingers deep within the Huttese slave trade, and she saw Ord Vaxal as an opportunity to further increase her personal prestige and power within her clan. Sassallo has proven to be shrewd in her business, and while not a staggering success by any means, she has garnered quite a reputation. If Sassallo has one weakness, it is games of chance. She rarely loses a wager, and can rarely resist to indulge in one if the opportunity presents itself. The stake of the bet doesn't matter to her so much as the game itself, and she isn't above cheating if her opponent isn't a Hutt.

Sassallo is a bloated Hutt who wears an excessive amount of very gaudy jewelry. Gem-encrusted rings adorn her fingers, necklaces with thick platinum links encircle her massive neck, and golden hoops hang from her nostrils and lips. She is never without her slave caller, a 30-centimeter-long scepter carved from flawless ivory and studded with emeralds. Sassallo's large retinue includes dozens of slaves, guards, and other assorted servants and yes-men.

Sassallo the Hutt: Female Hutt Noble 4/Scoundrel 5/Crime Lord 3; Init +3 (–1 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 15 (–1 size, –1 Dex, +9 class, –2 multiclass penalty); Spd 2; VP/WP 54/12; Atk +8/+3 melee (1d4+2, unarmed), or +5/+0 ranged; SQ Species traits, bonus class skill (intimidate), favor +2, inspire confidence, resource access, coordinate +1, illicit barter, lucky (1/day), precise attack +1, contact, inspire fear –2; SV Fort +4, Ref +7, Will +12; SZ L; FP 0; DSP 6; Rep +8; Str 14, Dex 9, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 18, Cha 12.

Equipment: Repulsorlift dais, gaudy jewelry, slave caller.

Skills: Appraise +14, Bluff +16, Computer Use +9, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +7, Forgery +11, Gamble +19, Gather Information +11, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +10, Knowledge (Ord Vaxal) +12, Knowledge (slavery) +20, Knowledge (streetwise) +14, Listen +8, Read/Write Basic, Read/Write Huttese, Sense Motive +13, Speak Basic, Speak Huttese, Speak Ryl, Spot +8.

Feats: Headstrong, Heroic Surge, Improved Initiative, Infamy, Persuasive, Skill Emphasis (Gamble, Knowledge [slav-

ery]), Trick, Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, simple weapons).

While Sassallo the Hutt is the undisputed ruler of Oubliette, Moff Adria Reyn is the master of the Callia sector as a whole. A political appointee with little practical military experience, Moff Reyn has always been a consummate politician. Over the years, she has managed to maneuver herself into the most favorable circumstances possible. No method has ever been too underhanded for her: bribery, extortion, slander, and murder have all served Adria quite well. Until she was confronted by Sassallo's cronies, Moff Reyn had never known the bitter taste of her own corrupt medicine.

Even though she had always been discreet in her underhanded dealings, Adria often utilized second parties to execute the shadier tasks for her. Although this kept her hands physically clean, it always ensured that there was someone out there who knew too much. Some of these operators were also employees of the Hutts, and they kept careful records of their transactions with the Moff. This information gave Sassallo a certain degree of leverage when she finally decided to negotiate with Moff Reyn for control of the Oubliette shadowport. Being blackmailed by the Hutts is a blow to her ego, but Adria is well-paid for her role in keeping the route to Oubliette open.

Adria Reyn is a middle-aged woman with graying brown hair, an athletic frame, and a cruel hazel eyes. She wears the uniform and trappings of her station well, cutting an impressive figure while maintaining her femininity. Adria accepts nothing less than perfection from her subordinates, and those who fail to please her often find themselves put to use in less important but distinctly more dangerous roles. Living only for the prestige and power of her position, Moff Reyn is nonetheless put off-balance by her reluctant relationship with the slug-like Sassallo. Given the opportunity, she would sever her ties to the crime lord in an instant.

Moff Adria Reyn: Female Human Noble 6/Soldier 2; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 16 (+1 Dex, +7 class, –2 multiclass penalty); Spd 10; VP/WP 48/14; Atk +5/+0 melee (1d4–1, unarmed), or +7/+2 ranged (3d6, blaster pistol); SQ Bonus class skill (bluff), favor +2, inspire confidence, resource access, coordinate +1; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +8; SZ M; FP 0; DSP 2; Rep +5; Str 8, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Equipment: Uniform, personal shuttle, blaster pistol.

Skills: Appraise +8, Bluff +11, Computer Use +4, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +8, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +5, Knowledge (politics) +11, Knowledge (streetwise) +4, Profession (sector Moff) +12, Search +2, Sense Motive +13, Read/Write Huttese, Speak Huttese.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (light, medium), Influence, Political Pull, Skill Emphasis (Bluff, Knowledge [politics]), Sharp-Eyed, Weapon Group Proficiencies (blaster pistols, blaster rifles, heavy weapons, simple weapons, vibro weapons).

Imperial Prison Ships and Transports

The workhorses of the Imperial blockade around Ord

Vaxal are the *Purgatory*-class prison ship and the *Peth*-class inmate transport shuttle. The *Purgatory*-class prison ship was originally designed as a troop conveyance during the Clone Wars, and dubbed the *Porter*-class transport. Due to the ship's cramped and uncomfortable accommodations, the soldiers it was designed to transport during its initial trials hated it. As newer designs were adopted by the Republic, existing *Porters* were converted into prison ships and renamed *Purgatories*.

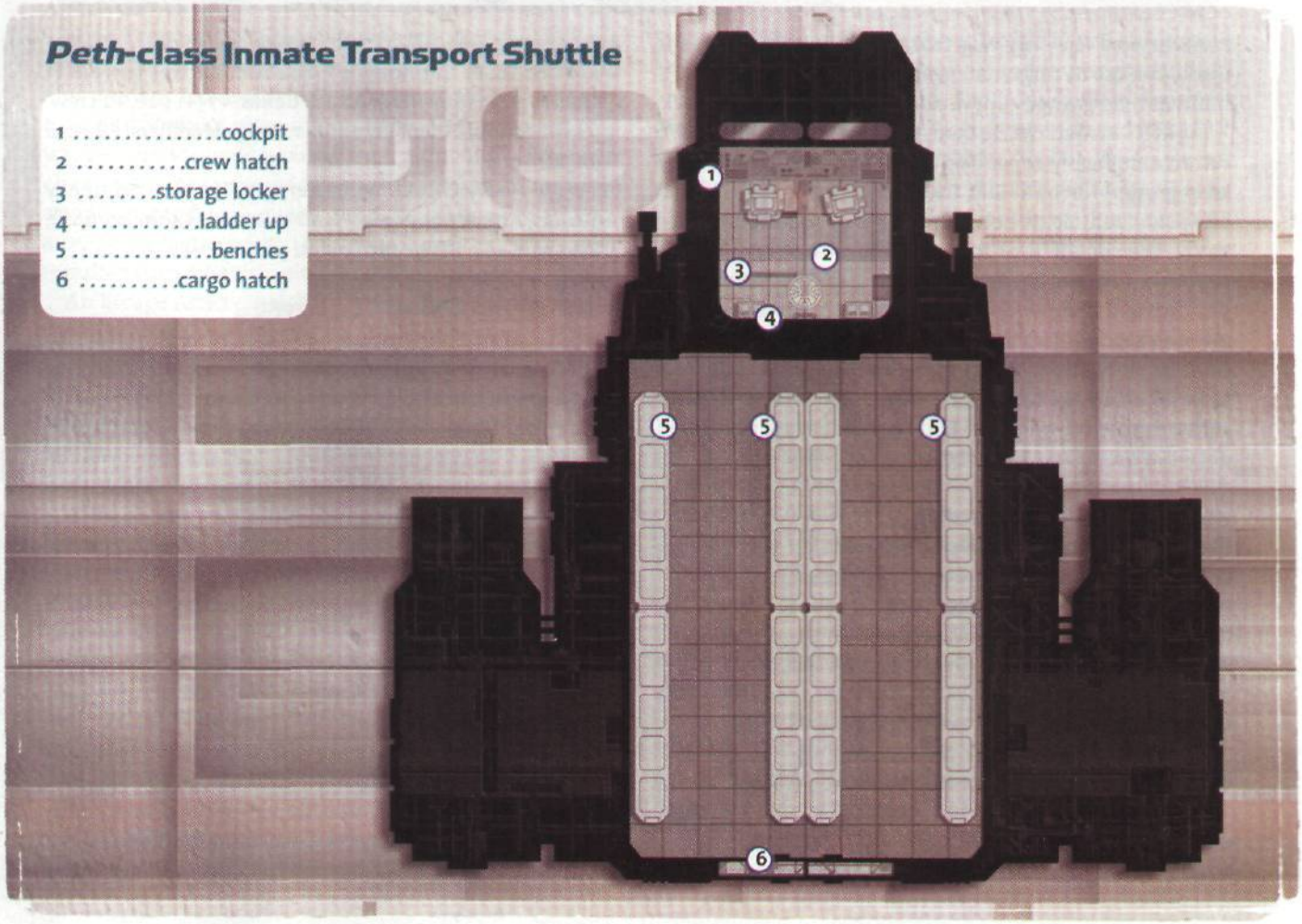
Aesthetic design has been sacrificed in the name of function insofar as the *Purgatory* is concerned. Over a kilometer in length, the design is blocky, box-like, and slow. Although armed with five turbolaser turrets and sixteen laser cannons, the ship performs poorly if pressed into combat. The *Purgatory* is also equipped with two landing bays, each housing three *Peth*-class transport shuttles and two TIE fighters.

There are eight prison blocks on board, with each block supporting 500 prisoners and 25 guards. Each block is further broken down into 50 cramped ten-prisoner cells, equipped with uncomfortable bunks and minimal refresher facilities. The only way out of a cell is a 2-meter-high, 1-meter-wide blast door, which is controlled from a security station elsewhere on the ship.

Rothana Heavy Engineering Purgatory-class Prison Ship

Class: Capital
Crew: 350 (Skilled +4)
Size: Colossal (1,060 meters)
Initiative: −4 (−8 size, +4 crew)
Hyperdrive: x2, x14 backup
Maneuver: −4 (−8 size, +4 crew)
Passengers: 200 (guards), 4,000 (prisoners)
Defense: 12 (−8 size, +10 armor)
Cargo Capacity: 15,000 tons
Shield Points: 200 (DR 60)
Consumables: 5 years
Hull Points: 460 (DR 60)
Cost: Not available for sale
Maximum Speed in Space: Cruising (2 squares/action)
Atmospheric Speed: Not applicable
Weapon: Turbolasers (5); **Fire Arc:** 2 front, 1 left, 1 right, 1 rear; **Attack Bonus:** −2 (−8 size, +2 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 5d10x5; **Range Modifiers:** PB −4, S −2, M/L n/a.
Weapon: Laser Cannons (16); **Fire Arc:** 6 front, 3 left, 3 right, 4 rear; **Attack Bonus:** +0 (−8 size, +2 crew, +8 fire control); **Damage:** 4d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** PB −4, S −2, M/L n/a.

The *Peth*-class Inmate Transport Shuttle is used to ferry inmates to the surface of Ord Vaxal. It is an oblong, bus-shaped transport, with a large, featureless cargo area. The ship's hold, which is intended to transport up to forty prisoners at a time, is equipped with simple benches and no safety restraints. These benches can be retracted into the floor, making the hold seem like the inside of a large



metallic box. The only way in or out of this cargo area is through a broad cargo hatch; access to the pilot compartment can be gained only through the cockpit's airlock.

Lightly armed with two laser cannons and two retractable heavy repeating blasters, which are used to keep ground forces at bay, the *Peth* is not designed as an offensive vehicle. When transporting prisoners to Ord Vaxal, the shuttle flies to a pre-determined spot on the planet's surface, hovers about 3–4 meters above the ground, and opens the rear cargo doors. Passengers are given 10 seconds to leave the ship before the pilots "stand it on its tail" and take off for orbit. Any prisoners who somehow manage to remain in the cargo area find themselves exposed to vacuum. The cargo doors are not closed until the transport returns to its mother ship.

Rothana Heavy Engineering Peth-class Inmate Transport Shuttle

Class: Space Transport
Size: Small (35 m long)
Hyperdrive: None
Passengers: 42 (2 guards, 40 prisoners)
Cargo Capacity: 20 tons (or passengers)
Consumables: 1 day (crew only)
Cost: 450,000 (new)
Crew: 4 (Skilled +4)
Initiative: (+1 size, +4 crew)
Maneuver: (+1 size, +4 crew)
Defense: 21 (+1 size, +10 armor)
Shield Points: 30 (DR 20)
Hull Points: 100 (DR 20)
Maximum Speed in Space: Attack (7 squares/action)
Atmospheric Speed: 850 km/h (14 squares/action)
Weapon: Laser Cannons (2); **Fire Arc:** Partial Turrets (1 front/right, 1 front/left); **Attack Bonus:** +7 (+1 size, +2 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 4d10×2; **Range Modifiers:** PB +0, S +0, M/L n/a.
Weapon: Heavy Repeating Blasters (2); **Fire Arc:** Underbelly Turrets; **Attack Bonus:** −2 (−8 size, +2 crew, +4 fire control); **Damage:** 4d8; **Range Increment:** 30 m.

Imperial Correctional Equipment

Specialized restraint equipment is required in order to control unruly or dangerous felons. Aboard Imperial prison ships, the PRC-316 restraint collar and the Cartel Secureworks Repulsorfield Generator are two examples of this type of device. Every prisoner, without exception, is fitted with a PRC-316, while only those convicts with a predilection for climbing or flight are equipped with a repulsorfield generator. Due to safety and security concerns, these devices are rarely removed prior to transferring prisoners between facilities (including Ord Vaxal).

Locris Syndicated Securities PRC-316 Prisoner Restraint Collar
Cost: 200
Availability: Rare
Weight: 1 kilogram
Era: All
Special: This item can be used with a special remote control (cost: 500, weight: 1 kg).

Used by Republic (and, later, Imperial) correctional officers, the PRC-316 is an inexpensive combination of slave collar and stun cuffs. Designed to keep even the most

unruly prisoners well-behaved, the PRC-316 is available in varying sizes. The collar consists of a reactive plasteel cable inside an insulating sheath that is worn around the neck and secured by a small magnalock. When activated, the collar delivers a stunning jolt. The wearer must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. The remote control can be keyed to activate either a specific collar individually, or a group of selected collars all at once.

In addition to the remote function, the collar has an anti-tampering mechanism. An Escape Artist check (DC 40) is required to slip free of the collar, and if the check fails by 5 or more points, the wearer takes 1d4 points of damage as the collar tightens around his neck, strangling the wearer for a short amount of time. The PRC-316 has a hardness of 10, 10 wound points, and a break DC of 30. Failing a break check by more than 5 points inflicts 1d4 points of damage on the wearer. The collars also includes monitoring equipment that acts as a homing beacon, and alerts a security station if the unit has been deactivated.

Imperial prison guards do not carry collar remotes with them. Security personnel in other portions of the ship constantly monitor the collars, and can administer stunning jolts or unlock the collars as required.

Cartel Secureworks Repulsorfield Generator
Cost: 150 **Weight:** .4 kilograms
Availability: Rare **Era:** All

The CS repulsorfield generator is a manacle that is fitted to a prisoner's left ankle (or equivalent). The manacle creates a minor repulsorfield that prevents the wearer from flying or climbing more than 1 meter off the ground. The wearer can struggle against this, requiring a Strength check (DC 20, +1 per additional meter past the first; attempting to fly ten meters from the ground will impose a DC 29 Strength check). Failure indicates that the wearer is pulled back to within a meter of the ground.

An Escape Artist check (DC 30) is required to slip free of the manacle. The manacle has a hardness of 10, 5 wound points, and a break DC of 30. A Disable Device skill check can be made to disable the repulsorfield generator, but this check has a DC of 30. Prisoners with flying or climbing abilities are typically fitted with a repulsorfield generator manacle immediately upon being incarcerated.

Prison Ship Personnel

Imperial prison guards are taken from the ranks of what used to be the Republic Peace Officers, and receive special training in the handling of prisoners and captives. Lightly-armored and equipped with non-lethal weapons, they are expected to intimidate those in their charge in order to keep them under control. Failing that, non-lethal force can be used in self defense, though how much force used depends largely on the individual guard's demeanor and the extent of his patience.

Stun batons and Merr-Sonn deck-sweeping stun blasters (see the *Star Wars Arms and Equipment Guide*, page 17) are standard equipment. Each guard also carries a blaster pistol, and wears a shiny black blast vest over a dark gray uniform. Their statistics match those of low- and mid-level Republic Peace Officers (see the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* Revised Core Rulebook, page 351), but replace the Great Fortitude feat with Weapon Group Proficiency (blaster rifles).

Incorporating Ord Vaxal Into Your Campaign

Being a combination of secret Imperial penal colony and vile Huttese shadowport, Ord Vaxal can be introduced as a tantalizing mystery for your players to discover. Even the best-kept secrets beget rumors, and the penal colony of Ord Vaxal (or the Oubliette shadowport) should be no exception. Any of a number of options can be used in order to hook your players into investigating these rumors.

The most obvious way to incorporate Ord Vaxal into your game is to maroon your players there as prisoners. This allows them to explore this mysterious, primitive world on their own terms, to become embroiled in the conspiracies of Ord Vaxal's petty warlords, and to devise an escape plan should they learn of Oubliette. Players can begin such a scenario as residents who have been living in Tof Soren for years, as prisoners who have been recently sent there, or as a mixture of the two.

If the characters are members of the Rebel Alliance, they might be sent in search of important personnel or allies who have gone missing, or who have been arrested by the Empire. Clues point to a secret Imperial prison facility, which the players must discover and investigate if they are to rescue their comrades. Thousands of Rebel sympathizers and political dissidents have been stranded on Ord Vaxal since the Emperor resumed using it as a penal colony. This makes the world a valuable source of allies in the fight to free to the galaxy from Palpatine's tyranny.

From an Imperial perspective, Ord Vaxal is a facility with a legitimate, if draconian, purpose. PCs who are Imperial agents may be assigned to protect the colony's secrecy from rebel spies. They might also be tasked with seeking out evidence of Moff Reyn's corruption and the Oubliette shadowport, which could obviously lead to lots of tension and intrigue. They may very well find themselves abandoned on the planet by their own superiors if their investigations bear too much fruit. On a world where they are commonly seen as the oppressors, they would be hard-pressed to find any allies at all.

Independent player groups with ties to the Hutts might find themselves hauling cargo to and from Oubliette. The slave trade is a lucrative business, and the players may very well find themselves involved in a transaction that they hadn't anticipated. Characters in the employ of rival Hutts might be sent to expose Oubliette, undermining Sassallo's operation within the Vaxal system, or a group of bounty hunter PCs might be assigned to track down a target in hiding within the shadowport. ●

Starships of the Galaxy

Arakyd Industries *Trident*-Class Surveyor

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Freighters and fighters are among the most widely available vessels on the market, but they're rarely suited to the rigors of extended deep space travel and planetary exploration. In response to what it perceived as an unfilled niche in the interstellar marketplace, Arakyd Industries created a specialized exploration vessel capable of surveying planetary environments that other starships simply can't enter. Using specialized propulsion technologies "borrowed" from the Sedrians, Arakyd created the *Trident*-class Surveyor, a long-range reconnaissance vehicle outfitted with a remarkable assortment of technology for the most demanding exploration missions imaginable.

The *Trident* can withstand intense external pressures as well as it handles the vacuum of space. Alternate propulsion and sensor systems combine with innovative hull reinforcement to create a fully submersible starship design—the *Trident* can operate safely underwater to a depth of 10 kilometers.

All of this innovation comes at a price, of course—quite literally. Many of the ship's systems are composed of custom-built components and rare metals, and it even contains a number of devices that were barely out of the prototype stage during its inception at the height of the Galactic Empire. These factors come together to make the *Trident*-class Surveyor one of the most exorbitantly priced starships of its size in the galaxy.

STAR WARS
ROLEPLAYING GAME

Arakyd Industries *Trident*-Class Surveyor

Class: Space Transport
Size: Medium-Size (82.5 meters)
Crew: 7–10 (Skilled +4)
Hyperdrive: x75 (x10 backup)
Initiative: +4 (+4 crew)
Passengers: 3
Maneuver: +4 (+4 crew)
Cargo Capacity: 80 tons
Defense: +25 (+15 armor)
Consumables: 9 months
Shield Points: 100 (DR 20)
Cost: 1,475,000 (new), 950,000 (used)
Hull Points: 180 (DR 20)
Maximum Speed in Space: Attack (8 squares/action)
Atmospheric Speed: 800 km/h (13 squares/action)
Aquatic Speed: 200 km/k (3 squares/action)
Weapon: Double turbolaser cannon (1); **Fire Arc:** Turret; **Attack Bonus:** +8 (+0 size, +2 crew, +6 fire control); **Damage:** 5d10x2; Range Modifiers: +0/-2/-4/-6
Weapon: Concussion mine layer (12 mines); **Fire Arc:** Rear; **Attack Bonus:** +14 (+8 size, +6 guidance system); **Damage:** 8d10x2; **Range Modifiers:** Not applicable (mines do not move once set).

Compartment Key

1. **Cargo Bay:** The *Trident's* cargo bay is located in an overhanging section of the upper deck of the ship, with a floor hatch that descends hydraulically to serve as a large cargo-loading elevator. This same hatch can be opened underwater for the deployment and retrieval of aquatic probe droids or even a reasonably sized submersible vessel. The entire compartment is outfitted with powerful pressure controls and circulation pumps to prevent flooding—even at great depths—so the area effectively functions as a mobile diving pool and underwater airlock.
2. **Weapon Compartment:** This section of the ship mounts a suite of offensive and defensive tactical systems, including a twin-barreled turbolaser turret, deflector shield generator, and a concussion minelayer. A storage rack affixed to the ceiling feeds seismic charges (12 total) to the minelaying hatch on the far side of the ship, and a computer terminal allows all of the above systems to be operated from this compartment, even if the command deck is lost.
3. **Hidden Electronics Suite:** In addition to processing and storing complex sensor data, the systems mounted in this secret area interface directly with the ship's AI. The sophisticated droid intelligence of a *Trident* Surveyor has unfettered access to every ship system. Though programmed for outstanding loyalty to her crew (and bestowed with a fair measure of scientific curiosity), each *Trident's* brain is outfitted with a verbal "kill-switch" that allows her captain to instantly disable the AI in any sort of emergency, just by uttering a specific code phrase. The electronics compartment itself is concealed by hidden pressure doors designed to protect the AI and any valuable research data in case the ship is ever boarded by pirates or other unwelcome forces. It's also shielded against sensor scans (DC +10) and spacious enough that the entire crew can hide within, if necessary.
4. **Upper Deck Corridors:** These passages facilitate easy access to each of the ship's upper deck compartments. A pressure hatch in the floor of one corridor allows crewmembers to quickly reach area 7 without relying on the lift tube. The doorway to the electronics suite (area 3) is cleverly concealed by a computer-controlled sliding wall section (Search DC 20).
5. **Engineering Bay:** All of the vessel's power and propulsion systems are accessible here, including a pair of networked power cores to satisfy the ship's intense energy needs. A specialized computer terminal in one corner lets the ship's engineer monitor all of the *Trident's* vital systems from one station.
6. **Lift Tube:** The doorway into the sensor suite is concealed behind a sliding wall panel controlled by the ship's computer (Search DC 20).
7. **Lower Deck Corridor:** This "L"-shaped corridor connects most of the lower-deck compartments, with a ladder built into one wall for emergency access to the upper deck.
8. **Command Deck:** The command deck's unusual location on the underside of the ship protects the crew from enemy fire, which can often target the ship from a different vector. It also allows the crew to observe freight loading and, more importantly, probe retrieval operations. Finally, the unique vantage point allows the crew to directly survey the waters below when the vessel is exploring an undersea environment. In an extreme emergency, the entire command deck can detach from the rest of the hull to form a temporary lifeboat. Backup life support only lasts about 48 hours, which is plenty of time for the compartment to float to an ocean surface, but hardly sufficient for a crew stranded in deep space.
9. **Refresher.**
10. **Crew Quarters:** Three triple-level bunks provide accommodations for as many as nine crewmates, though the situation is far from comfortable under such circumstances. The compartment more commonly houses six individuals, with the top three bunks stowed in the ceiling to conserve space.
11. **Escape Pod:** Although the command deck can serve as a sort of detachable lifeboat, a *Trident*-class ship also features small one-seat escape pod with a week's worth of life support. Up to three adult humans can squeeze in, but the life support dwindles proportionately. If deployed underwater, the pod rises to the surface; atmospheric regulators shield the passengers against any pressure-related adversity.
12. **Mess Hall:** The mess deck serves the crew as meeting-place and social center. Storage compartments in the walls and ceiling contain a variety of culinary goods to make long journeys more tolerable.
13. **Crew Lounge:** The wall-mounted entertainment center here offers a great variety of distractions.
14. **Computer Lab:** Two technicians can share the terminals here, which are hard-wired into the central processors in area 3. These terminals provide a +5 circumstance bonus on skill checks related to scientific analysis.
15. **Medical Suite/Science Lab:** Four bacta tanks and three surgical beds effectively outfit the surveyor as a mobile hospital ship, but they're more often used for the study and preservation of biological materials taken from visited worlds. A pair of experimental stasis pods can be used to transport delicate biosamples or critically injured crewmembers. All Treat Injury skill checks made in this lab receive a +5 circumstance bonus due to the state-of-the-art facilities. The room also stores three medical kits, a dozen medpacs, and a surgery kit.
16. **Captain's Cabin:** A small but finely appointed room provides the ship's captain with a measure of privacy and quick access to the command deck.
17. **Airlock:** The *Trident's* airlock is protected by an angled section of hull plating which folds down to form a set of stairs to the hatch itself. An adjacent storage locker within the airlock contains several flight suits, breath masks, and glow rods for extravehicular activity, plus a tool kit and any weapons a crew may choose to store here. A built-in decontamination shower helps to protect the crew from alien pathogens and other environmental hazards.

KEY

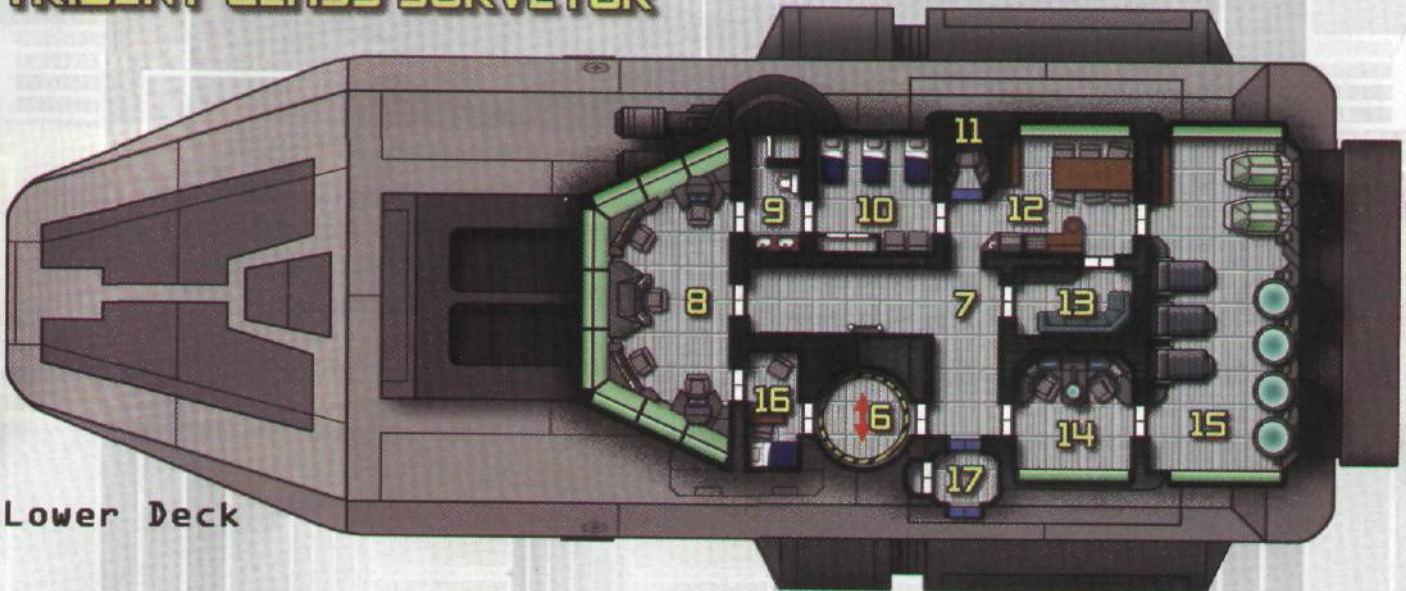
1 square = 2m

- Life Support System
- Bunks
- Surgical Bed
- Cargo Crate
- Cargo Door Hydraulics
- Seats
- Computer
- Stasis Pod
- Shield Generator
- Desk
- Binary Loadlifter
- Hatch, Airlock
- Hatch, Floor
- Hatch, Secure
- Hatch, Standard
- Bacta Tank
- Sublight Engine
- Refresher
- Lift Tube
- Ladder
- Lounge Seat
- Power Core
- Mess Hall Facilities
- Shelves
- Hyperdrive
- Table
- Turret Actuator
- Viewport

Upper Deck

ARAKYD INDUSTRIES

TRIDENT-CLASS SURVEYOR



Lower Deck